

TOP Santé

LOVE YOUR HEALTHY LIFE

17-PAGE
BEAUTY
SPECIAL

Get *pH savvy*
and wave
goodbye to
wrinkles!

15

solutions for
radiant skin

BOOST YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

What to eat,
think and do
NOW to stay
sharp in future

BANISH MIGRAINES
It's **GOOD** news for sufferers!

EXPERT ADVICE

Soothe eczema ✓
Lower blood pressure ✓
Prevent gum disease ✓

Be FOREVER YOUNG

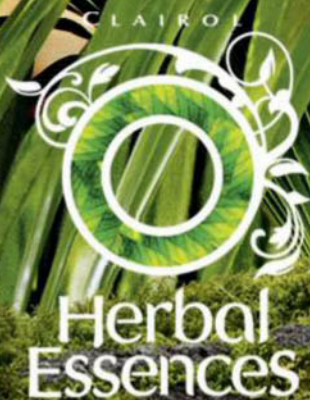
- Feel-good workouts for a strong, supple body
- Anti-age your hormones for lasting vitality
- 10 natural ingredients to slow time

NUTRITIOUS & DELICIOUS

Easy recipes to cleanse and rejuvenate



TAKE YOUR HAIR TO PARADISE





MEET OUR EXPERTS



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answers your skin
health questions
on p94.



Angelique Panagos
advises on eating well
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Dr Chidi Ngwaba
helps you tackle the
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the menopause
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Digital editions
available on iPad
& Android.

LEARN THE LINGO

Santé means
'health' in French.
So here's to your
Top Health!

Feeling young AT ANY AGE

You're only as old as you feel, or so they say. So why don't I still look 20? Because a lot of the time I *feel* that age, despite the fact that externally I've clearly moved into grown-up territory (career, mortgage, pension, not to mention fine lines and skin that's lost some of its youthful tautness – boo). But, luckily this issue is dedicated to helping us all find ways to look and feel younger for longer, through healthful eating (p102), maintaining good blood pressure (p34), balancing our hormones to stay youthful (p36) as well as the latest beauty-boosting ingredients, make-up tips and skincare advice (starting p71).

**We can all
stay fit and
youthful by
adopting
easy diet
and beauty
tweaks.**

Staying young from within

Good gut health also keeps you young, and is at the core (literally!) of your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. This year has seen a slew of digestion-related books published, as well as a handful of TV health documentaries introducing the populace to the idea of the microbiome, made up of millions of bacteria, good and bad,

that live in our intestines.

It's a subject that fascinates me, and I wax lyrical to anyone who'll listen about the benefits of fermented foods, such as sauerkraut (I love the red cabbage one from online health store Red23); kefir, which I make using organic coconut water and a sachet of Body Ecology kefir starter

culture; and sugar-free probiotic yoghurts, my favourite of late being the natural or raw cacao-flavoured coconut yoghurts from CO YO (are you noticing a theme?!)

So, this month sees the start of a new six-part series all about various aspects of gut

health, beginning with microbes. In coming issues we'll delve into stress and IBS, candida and sugar, and more. I hope you'll join us in learning how to stay healthy on the inside to maintain longer, happier, more beautiful lives on the outside.

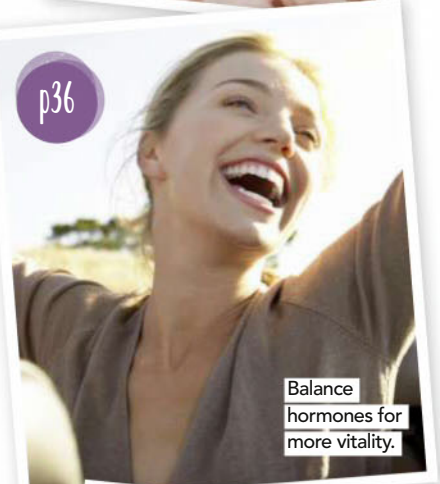
Katy x

@RealKatyLouise

Write to us at talkback@topsante.co.uk,
@TopSanteUK or /TopSantemagazine



Discover the best
anti-ageing beauty buys.



Balance
hormones for
more vitality.



Cook yourself younger
with nourishing recipes.

THE TOP SANTÉ MANIFESTO

At *Top Santé* we believe every woman has the ability to maximise her health and beauty at any age and regardless of her health history. With a balanced diet, effective exercise and a positive mindset, you can stay younger for longer, inside and out. We'll bring you the latest information regarding

wellbeing, fitness, food and beauty, empowering you to make informed choices now and for your future health. What's gone before can't be undone or redone, so leave it in the past and focus on what you can change today. We're here to help you on that path to better health, one small step at a time.

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PLUS get a Lavera Basis Sensitiv Skincare Set, worth £37! See p54





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WIN!

A two-night city spa break worth £800, plus skincare sets, luxury face cream and more! p90



5AM? I DECIDE WHEN THE NIGHT ENDS, NOT MY PERIOD.



New* Always Ultra. Up to 100% leak protection.

Stay out till sunrise with new Always Ultra. Its super absorbent core has liquid-locking gel, and gel can't leak.

Remember, great stories don't happen when you stay in. Also available in Liners.

clean • dry • fresh
always



*Improved core with more liquid locking gel.

YOUR HEALTHY September

Kick-start your month with the latest wellbeing news, events and products.



TRY THIS THAI DELIGHT

To support the Great British Sunday Lunch, why not try this healthy Thai recipe from Ella Woodward's best-selling book *Deliciously Ella* (Yellow Kite):

Serves 4

- 2 x 400ml tins coconut milk
 - 2 x 400g tins tomatoes
 - 2-3cm piece fresh ginger, grated
 - 1-2 tsp chilli flakes
 - 1 large butternut squash (1kg)
 - 2 medium aubergines (600g)
 - Handful fresh coriander, chopped
 - 1 x 400g tin chickpeas, drained
 - 3 teaspoons brown rice miso paste
- Preheat the oven to 200°C (Gas 6). Put the milk, tomatoes, ginger and chilli in a saucepan, season and heat until boiling. Peel the squash, then cut both it and the aubergines into bite-sized pieces. Add these to the coconut and tomato mixture. Cook for 30 minutes, at which point add the coriander and chickpeas to the pan with the miso. Then place the pan back in the oven for 30 minutes.



EAT FOR CHARITY

Hone your culinary skills for a good cause by hosting a Great British Sunday Lunch on 13 September. Round up family, friends and colleagues, and either don your apron at home or find a local pub or community hall that's joining in the action. All donations raised will go to the RAF Benevolent Fund so the charity can carry on helping those who have served

in conflict get back to life after being in action. Cook up a feast of traditional roast beef and veg, or experiment with dishes from around the world, such as curry, spaghetti bolognese or fajitas.

For more info or to sign up for your free fundraising kit, including guest invitations, games, decorations and more, visit rafbf.org/gbsl.

10g of nuts per day can help you live longer*



FOOD FOR ROYALTY

Discover the health benefits of royal jelly, which is a rich source of B-vitamins, amino acids and potent anti-ageing antioxidants. Research has suggested it has the power to help balance your immune system, lower cholesterol and act as an anti-inflammatory.

Royal jelly is created by worker bees from a mix of honey, pollen and enzymes, and fed to their queen, enabling her to live up to 40 times longer than other bees. Try Arkopharma's Arko Royal Organic Jelly, which has 1500mg of fresh royal jelly in each tube, and can be added to any cold drink (£15 for 10 vials, arkopharma.com).



Cycling dates for your diary

BIKE TO WORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Thousands of commuters will be taking part in Cyclescheme's Cycle to Work Day on 3 September. Forty nine per cent of cycling commuters say they feel mentally healthier. Cycling also has calming effects, with 40 per cent of cyclists experiencing less stress in the workplace. If you fancy joining in, visit cycletoworkday.org.



JOIN THE PALACE TO PALACE CYCLE RIDE

There's still time to join the 2015 Palace to Palace cycle ride to raise funds for The Prince's Trust on 13 September. Choose from 45- or 90-mile routes depending on your ability. The race starts at Buckingham Palace and goes all the way to Windsor Castle. Visit princes-trust.org.uk for details.



* STUDY BY MAASTRICHT UNIVERSITY. RESEARCHERS FOUND A 23 PER CENT LOWER CHANCE OF DEATH DURING THE 10-YEAR STUDY IN PEOPLE EATING AT LEAST 10G OF NUTS A DAY

'It takes a long time to be young.'

Picasso

Improve the look of your legs

You know those tiny blood vessels often found on your legs or face? Those wiggly red lines are known as spider veins, and it's estimated up to 60 per cent of adults have them. They can be caused by a number of factors, including circulatory problems, and can look unsightly. Remescar Spider Veins is a cream that treats and prevents these veins by

reinforcing the vessel walls and providing structural support, reducing the redness and length of the veins and stimulating circulation when used daily for two to three months. Until now, the main treatment was surgery (£29.95/50ml, remescar.com).



In the mood for HEALTHY FOOD

Jo Pratt

TRIED & TESTED



EASY, DELICIOUS, HEALTHY FOOD

There's a new healthy eating book on the block! *Top Santé* loves *In the Mood for Healthy Food* by Jo Pratt (Nourish Books). All the recipes are healthy, easy to make and the ingredients are readily accessible in supermarkets. Our favourites were the pad Thai with prawns, and the courgette, pistachio and orange loaf cake, which were easy to make and went down a storm!



NEW JUICE ON THE LOOSE

Last month The Juice Smith opened its first store in Surrey, selling cold pressed fruit and veg juices. Cold pressed juices are the way forward because more of the nutrients are kept, meaning maximum health and beauty benefits to you such as clearer skin and improved energy levels. We particularly like the 'Soleil', containing ginger, green apple, lemon and turmeric, all effective at reducing inflammation and improving digestive health (£7.50/420ml, thejuicesmith.com).

Choc-tastic news!

Eating up to 100g of chocolate a day is linked to lowered heart disease and stroke risk, according to research published in the *Heart Journal*. The study found that, compared with those who ate no chocolate, people who ate 100g of either milk or dark chocolate per day had an 11 per cent lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

It's thought this is partly because chocolate lovers tend to eat a diet high in energy-giving fats and carbs, and don't drink as much alcohol as non chocolate eaters. Our advice? Stick to 70 per cent cocoa, or try raw cacao in a smoothie for a less sugary hit.





For light little gatherings

enjoy Shloer Light, the delightfully
easy-going alcohol alternative
with no added sugar

Shloer Light contains absolutely no added sugar and is free from preservatives, artificial colours and flavourings. With just 22 calories per 100ml, it's the perfect choice for your light little gathering.

Available now from retailers nationwide

shloer.co.uk  /Shloer  @ShloerOfficial

here's to
good
times

NEW
Shloer
light

the sparkling juice drink



Improve your mood tonight!

The benefits of a good night's sleep stretch far beyond our physical health. One in four of us will snap at someone at work because of a poor night's sleep, a study has revealed, and more than a third are regularly disrupted by their partner waking them up, causing them to be grumpy during their morning commute. The research, commissioned by mattress company Sleeping Duck*, found more than half of us regularly wake up in a bad mood and firmly insist we're not 'morning people'.

TOP SANTÉ SOLUTIONS

- Evidence suggests lavender oil may slow the activity of the nervous system, improving sleep quality. Try a few drops of essential oil on your duvet.
- Herbals teas such as chamomile have a relaxing effect, helping us to unwind. Chamomile plants contain a compound called apigenin, thought to be a therapeutic substance.
- Get the right mattress, as an uncomfortable one won't support you when you sleep, wreaking havoc with your sleep patterns.

Raise money for cancer care

Put the kettle on and dig out your favourite cake recipe in time for the World's Biggest Coffee Morning on 25 September in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Visit coffee.macmillan.org.uk to get your free Coffee Morning kit, or text SEPT to 70550.



BIG-UP OMEGA-3

The over-50s are feeling healthier than those in their 30s, and it could be thanks to fish. A survey found people over 50 taking omega-3 supplements felt an average of three years younger than those who didn't. So include plenty of Alaskan salmon, mackerel and sardines in your diet. Omega-rich diets may be linked with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease. Find out more at lifesdha.com.

MANAGE CHOLESTEROL

According to a survey, a whopping 68 per cent of us are interested in using a natural and effective treatment for cholesterol. Arterin, a one-a-day natural food supplement containing a microscopic fungus raised on rice, works alongside other ingredients to prevent cholesterol production (£24.99 for 60 tablets, available from Lloyds Pharmacy and online at lloydspharmacy.com).

The clever app that could conquer diabetes

A design student from Brunel University London has developed a device that aims to improve patients' self-management of diabetes. Gluco Duo is a glucose meter that works by simply pushing

on a pad containing a needle. A drop of blood is absorbed by the pad and analysed for blood sugar levels. This information is sent direct to your doctor or diabetes nurse via an

app on your phone. Its developer, Oscar Daws, hopes the product may be on sale across the UK in as little as two years. The disease affects more than three million people in the UK alone. 📱



* FOR A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP, VISIT SLEEPINGDUCK.COM

Your life, **YOUR WAY**

Age is but a number and needn't define you.
Meet the women who have stayed young
thanks to their unique lifestyle choices.

'MY NEW DIET HAS TAKEN 10 YEARS OFF ME'

**Cherry Woods, 42, is a
skin therapist from
Richmond-upon-Thames
in London.**

PEOPLE OFTEN TELL ME I LOOK younger than I am, which is always lovely to hear. As a skin therapist I feel the pressure to keep my face and skin in good order as people come to me for help with theirs. But I haven't always been this healthy – nor has my skin looked so good.

Thirteen years ago my husband, Ian, got a job in America and we moved to Washington DC. Our lives were pretty hectic and as a result our diets suffered. We ate a lot of convenience food and I always seemed to have a cup of coffee in hand. At one point I was drinking around 10 cups a day. I suffered from

heart palpitations, sweats and all kinds of unpleasant side effects. My skin paid the price, too. I had areas of rosacea that I just couldn't get rid of.

IN SEARCH OF A CURE

One day, while researching rosacea and its causes on the Internet, I stumbled across a page that said diet can play a huge part in skin problems. It was then that I had an epiphany and decided I needed a drastic diet overhaul.

I had been working as a beauty therapist, but, inspired by my findings, I decided to specialise in skin and enrolled on a number of skin-specific short courses. I looked further than the topical issues and found out how diet and nutrition can impact the skin from within. I soon discovered that too much caffeine stimulates your adrenal glands, which produces cortisol and puts your body into a constant state of 'fight or flight'. This then prompts the release of sugar, which causes inflammation at a cellular level. For me, this was a trigger for my rosacea.

BETTER SKIN FROM WITHIN

I also discovered that eating a low GI diet can help keep your skin healthy, smoother and less prone to wrinkles. GI stands for glycaemic index, a rating

system for foods containing carbohydrates. It shows how quickly each food affects your blood sugar levels. Anything below 50 on the rating is low, while anything above 70 will cause a sugar spike.

White bread, crisps and even cooked carrots rate highly, as the high starch content breaks down into simple sugars. Eating low GI foods has also been proven to help reduce





“While looking for causes of rosacea I had an epiphany and decided to overhaul my diet.”

small portions of leafy greens, such as spinach, with a portion of grilled tuna or salmon on a bed of quinoa, as all of these are low GI.

I enjoy snacking on raw veg throughout the day, because veg in its raw form has a lower GI than when cooked. Broccoli is a particular favourite of mine.

I also swapped cows' milk for goats' milk, which has lower sugar levels, more vitamin C and higher calcium levels, all of which is better for my skin.

When it comes to coffee, I've managed to cut out my daily lattes completely. Going from 10 cups a day to none at all was quite an achievement, particularly as I went cold turkey. This dramatic approach of cutting it out in one fell swoop wouldn't suit everyone, but for me it was the easiest way to do it.

I've found the whole process of changing my diet fairly straightforward as I've never felt deprived of different foods and flavours and the routine really suits my lifestyle. I've never been a big chocolate and cake eater so I don't miss those sugary treats and I really enjoy the wide array of healthy foods on offer. In Richmond where I live, there's a whole host of health food stores, and raw food is high on the agenda, so I'm lucky to live in such a healthy area.

REAPING THE BENEFITS

Within a matter of weeks of starting my new regime I looked and felt so much better. My skin improved in clarity and brightness and my rosacea cleared up completely.

Overall, my new take on food has changed my life and appearance. I have so much more energy than I used to have when my body was pumped with caffeine, my system doesn't feel sluggish and I feel and look so much healthier – and about 10 years younger!

For more on Cherry Woods' Skin Clinic email holly@hellopeepo.com.

inflammation in the body and help keep your metabolism on an even keel.

A typical low GI diet for me doesn't mean cutting out sugary food completely, but what I have done is change my portion sizes to ensure I'm never eating in excess – I call it 'eating in a low GI manner'.

I now have six smaller meals a day as opposed to three bigger ones. This fits better with my hectic schedule, and

it also makes me feel a lot less bloated. I'm a bit of a grazer so this whole routine really works for me.

For breakfast I have two pieces of mango, a shot of ginger water, a few slices of cucumber and a bite of an apple or banana. This way I never feel deprived of different flavours, I just eat less of them to keep my glycaemic score down.

For lunch and dinner, I like to have

'I'VE DANCED MY WAY TO HEALTH!'

Sue Pearson, 49, is an international science writer from Hitchin.

WHEN I WAS 12 I WAS DIAGNOSED with scoliosis, which is an abnormal twisting of the spine. The top of my spine had a 70 per cent curve and it was so severe that when I was 13 I had an operation to insert a 20-inch metal rod to hold it straight.

I didn't do a great deal of sport growing up as my mum was worried about me being injured. But when I was older, doctors advised me to exercise as much as possible in order to keep within my ideal BMI levels, as any excess weight on my stomach could put extreme pressure on my back and cause even more problems. However, I struggled to find a type of exercise that suited me until I was in my 20s.

TIME TO DANCE

One night back in the early 1990s, my husband Dave and I had just been to see a popular film of the time called *Strictly Ballroom*. Feeling inspired, we decided dancing might be the way to go.

Over the next few months, we tried a variety of different classes, including a sequence dance class. I think we lowered the average age by about 30 years! Although we really enjoyed it, we felt it wasn't for us so we tried a few others, including ballroom and Latin, but still felt it wasn't quite what we were looking for.

We happened upon modern jive by accident through connections at our other classes, and as soon as we tried it, we knew it was for us. Jive is an arm-led dance done on an eight-beat rhythm and it works every bit of your body, particularly your legs and core. It's fast and you work up a sweat. I found from looking at the pedometer I wear that one jive class equals double the steps of two aerobics classes. Pretty impressive and so much fun!

I've been jiving for more than 20 years now and I just love it. I even

travel around my local area teaching others. It gives me something to look forward to and allows me to exercise without even realising it and without putting excessive pressure on my back.

ENJOYING THE HEALTH BENEFITS

Physically it's kept me in great shape. I never wanted dramatic weight loss, just a way to keep my weight on an even keel and keep my muscles strong. I'm only 5ft 2in so I need to make sure I stay trim, particularly with my back problems. I love how jive gets my circulation flowing and floods my body

with endorphins, which boosts my white blood cell count, lowers any cortisol levels from the stresses of the day and makes me feel great! The boost of circulation and sweat helps me get rid of toxins and gives my skin a healthy glow. As I get into my 50s it's crucial to keep my body toned and strong, and dancing does just that.

What's more, jive has helped keep my stress levels in check too. I liken it to a more active form of meditation. You have to focus so intently on the moves that it gives you a way to forget all about the stresses of life.

“Jive has helped keep my stress levels in check... it's like an active meditation.”



'DECLUTTERING HELPS ME STAY RELAXED'

Juliet Landau-Pope, 52, is a declutter coach from North West London.

I WAS A UNIVERSITY LECTURER

when my neighbour's husband died and she asked if I'd help clear some of his stuff. The gratification I felt from helping her was immense, so I decided to look into whether I could help others in this way for a living. I joined the Association of Professional Declutterers and Organisers, and now offer a decluttering and life coach package to help people come to terms with change in their lives.

Although I've trained as a certified coach, my decluttering skills developed through my own life experience. Between the ages of 18 and 40, I moved house every couple of years, becoming adept at packing and organising my belongings.

Decluttering has definitely helped me in my life, firstly with sleep. Studies show a messy bedroom can affect quality of sleep and there's no doubt that waking up in a room that feels cluttered can affect your mood for the rest of the day.

“Mental decluttering involves focusing not on what I can't do, but on what I can.”

Whatever happens in the rest of my house, which I share with two teenagers, I always keep my bedroom clutter-free. It's also stressful to open a wardrobe crammed full of clothes that no longer fit or never will! Decluttering has involved letting go of garments that I bought with the intention of losing weight, ones I've outgrown or that no longer serve a purpose.

This might seem strange, but decluttering my shoes was an important stage in coming to terms with the fact I suffer from Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a condition that damages the peripheral nerves, causing muscle weakness in my ankles, wrists, feet and hands. It affects my balance and mobility so I'm restricted to wearing 'sensible' shoes, trainers or supportive

boots. Saying goodbye to sandals and stilettos, however, was quite emotional, not because I was attached to the shoes themselves, but because they represented fun, freedom and fashion.

MAKING SPACE FOR ME

Decluttering isn't just about material stuff, it also applies to time management. Clearing space in my diary to make time for what really matters is essential to my health and wellbeing.

A cluttered mind can lead to stress and burnout so getting everything in order helps me to feel in control. This involves making decisions, planning and prioritising, and creating space so there's room for spontaneity, too.

Despite a busy work schedule, I prioritise my weekly sessions with a

personal trainer and my Saturday morning yoga class. I also walk in the local park every day, thanks to our rescue puppy who we adopted last summer. Chatting to neighbours, being outdoors and exercising has improved my health, fitness and wellbeing.

Perhaps most importantly, decluttering involves focusing not on what I can't do because of my physical condition, but on what I can. I'm fortunate to have a wonderful career, meaningful work, close family and friends and a supportive community.

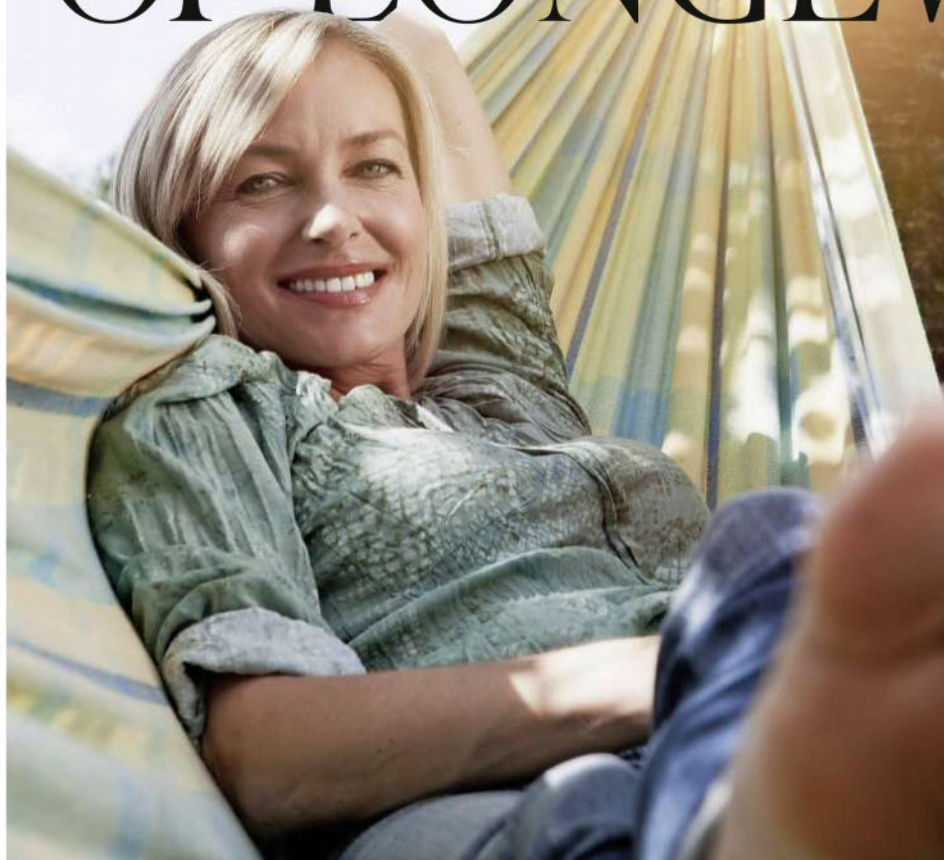
Mindfulness and meditation help me to declutter my mind of negative thoughts and ideas that serve no purpose. We're not on this earth forever so it's important to make time and space for what really matters and never take life for granted. It's an ethos that certainly keeps me feeling young and, according to friends, looking it too.

For more about Juliet's services, visit jlpcoach.com.





20 SECRETS OF LONGEVITY



Stay fit and well for years to come with these 20 proven tips.

EVERYONE WANTS to live a long and healthy life, don't they? And thanks to medical advances and better living standards, a third of children born today are expected to live to 100. Today there are already 450,000 people worldwide who are 100 years old or more. Gladys Hooper from the Isle of Wight is the UK's oldest living person, and she's had a whale of a time as a concert pianist, tennis player, baker and amateur pilot. She celebrates her 113th birthday next year and credits her busy, active life for her longevity. Here's how to follow in her footsteps.

Grab a good night's sleep

When you sleep, your brain spends the energy you'd usually use on walking, talking and thinking, on repairing itself against daily stresses, such as inflammation and toxins.

Scientists have found that seven or eight hours' uninterrupted sleep

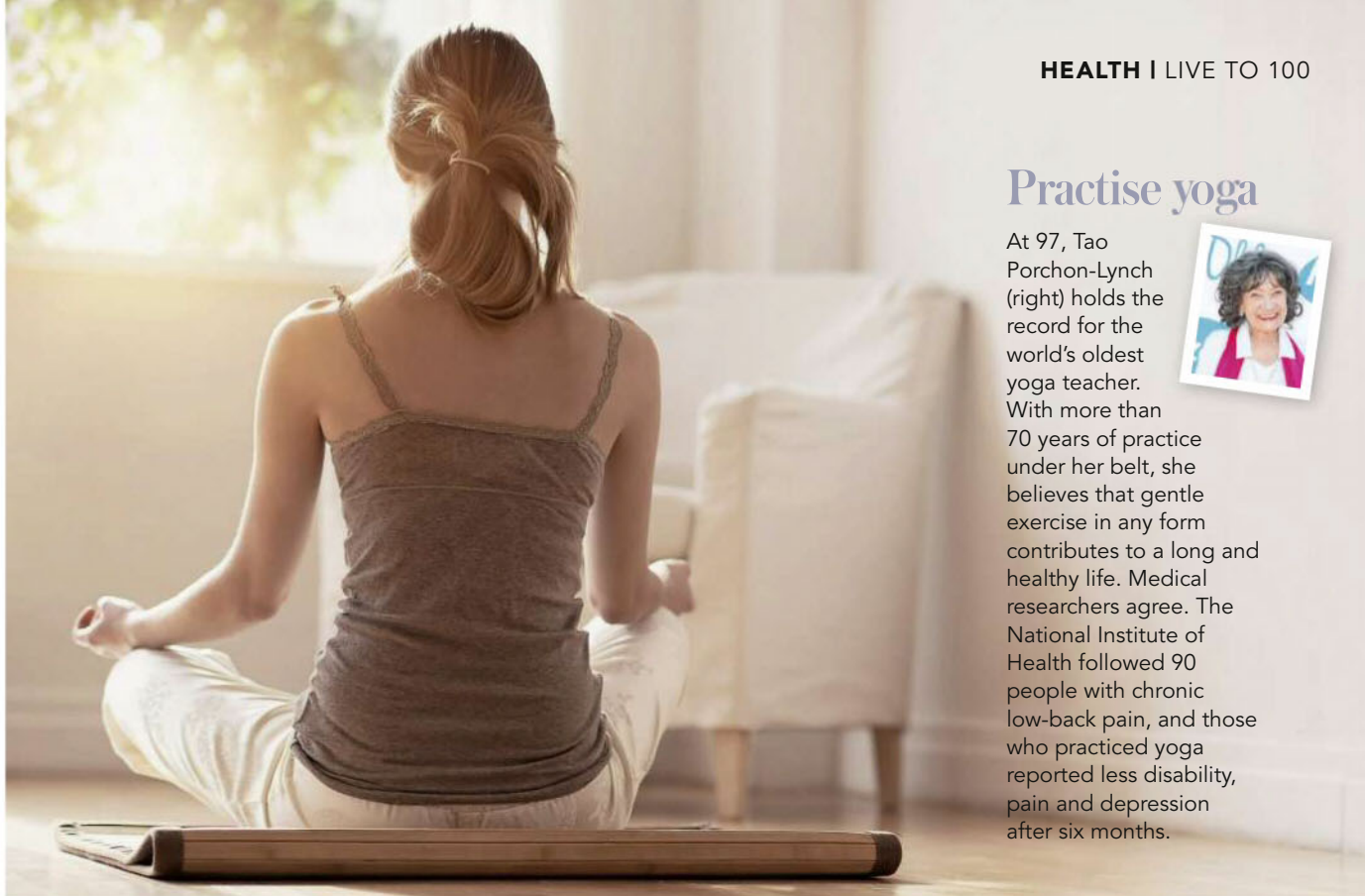
is best. In a study spanning two decades, women who slept fewer than seven hours a night didn't live as long as those who got their full quota. If you struggle to sleep, try adding a few drops of relaxing lavender oil to your pillow.



CUT SUGAR An increased level of blood glucose can cause what's called 'hippocampal atrophy' – in other words, shrinkage in your brain where your memories are stored. People with dementia have also been shown to have higher levels of blood glucose. So try not to have more than six teaspoons of added sugar a day.

FIND PURPOSE

An eight-year study found that people who have a higher sense of purpose in life are 30 per cent less likely to die early than those who don't feel their life is particularly worthwhile.



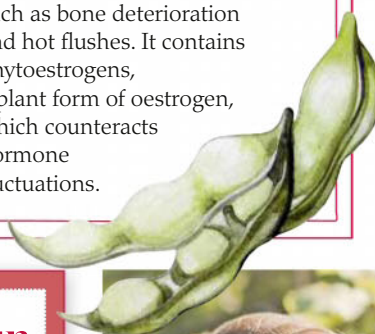
Practise yoga

At 97, Tao Porchon-Lynch (right) holds the record for the world's oldest yoga teacher. With more than 70 years of practice under her belt, she believes that gentle exercise in any form contributes to a long and healthy life. Medical researchers agree. The National Institute of Health followed 90 people with chronic low-back pain, and those who practiced yoga reported less disability, pain and depression after six months.



ENJOY SOY In Okinawa, one of the islands near Japan, the average life expectancy is 81, compared to 78 in the USA and United Kingdom. This is partly credited to a diet full of fermented soy. Soy benefits the women on the island, who have far fewer

menopausal symptoms, such as bone deterioration and hot flushes. It contains phytoestrogens, a plant form of oestrogen, which counteracts hormone fluctuations.



Get some loving

The more sex you have, the longer you'll live, say researchers from Queens University in Belfast. They studied 1,000 people over the age of 40, over the course of 10 years, and found those who had sex on a regular basis lived twice as long as those who didn't. The reason is that nookie raises your heartbeat from 70 beats per minute to 150, improves your circulation and strengthens your lungs.

Eat sardines in the sun

There's plenty you can do to keep your bones strong and reduce the risk of fractures and falls. First up is getting your crucial fix of a calcium and vitamin D. Women need around 1000mg of calcium a day – it's what makes up 99 per cent of your bones – and sunlight helps your body absorb it.

Fill up on calcium-rich sardines (with 285mg of calcium in a 60g tin), and spend at least 15 minutes per day outside to absorb sunlight.



Laugh away germs

The next time you're having a giggle, rejoice in the fact you're also boosting your immune system. Japanese researchers discovered an increase of disease-fighting cells in the blood samples of people who'd just watched a funny film. Levels stayed high for up to 12 hours afterwards.



Make friends

The Longevity Project at the University of Chicago found that those who live longer avoid serious ailments in later life by forging long-lasting, meaningful connections with others. In essence, strong, happy relationships lead to healthy, longer lives. The findings showed social connections have as much impact as exercise and a healthy diet on longevity. 'Those who didn't have social networks were 14 per cent more likely to die prematurely,' says Rod Francis, curator of thegrowyoungproject.com.

LIFT WEIGHTS Weightlifting helps you look lean and limits sarcopenia – the muscle loss experienced when our hormone levels change. It certainly works for 77-year-old, 105lb Willie Murphy from New York. Her ability to lift twice her body weight keeps her strong. It saw her winning in the 2014 World Natural Powerlifting Federation World Championships.



Enjoy the magic of mushrooms!

Fungi could really help you live longer, it turns out! 'Reishi mushrooms contain antioxidants, including polysaccharides, a type of carbohydrate molecule; peptides, which are chains of amino acids, the components of protein; and phenols, a family of plant substances that includes flavonoids,' says nutritionist Cassandra Barns. 'All these protect cells against oxidative stress, which is a primary cause of ageing.' Try Mico-rei (£55.50 from Harrods or hifasdaterra.com).



SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Another tip from the Okinawans in Japan is to eat fewer calories. They eat an average of 1,700 daily cals and practice 'Hara hachi bu', which is to stop eating when they are 80 per cent full. Even just eating 200 fewer calories for a couple of days a week improves various health markers such as blood pressure, glucose, and inflammation.



Eat fermented foods

'Fermented foods have been eaten by traditional cultures – no pun intended! – for millennia,' says Rod Francis, curator of thegrowyoungproject.com. 'They benefit your health by improving the way the healthy bacteria in your gut communicates with the rest of your body. Studies suggest this can improve the function of your immune system, help to fight cancer and improve the way your body absorbs nutrients.' Eating four or five servings a week should be sufficient, for example a pot of natural yogurt, a glass of kefir, which is like sour milk, or a 4oz serving of raw sauerkraut.

HAVE YOUR WEETABIX...

...Or any other wholegrain food. A US study showed that eating more wholegrains – an average of 2.5 servings per day – reduced the risk of cardiovascular disease by 21 per cent. One serving of wholegrains is a bowl of cereal such as Weetabix or porridge, a slice of granary, wholemeal or rye bread, or grains such as quinoa, buckwheat and millet. Make sure you eat it with protein, too, such as an egg or dollop of yoghurt to avoid spiking blood sugar levels.



ENJOY A GLASS OF RED WINE

An extract found in the skin of red grapes, called resveratrol, has been found to suppress molecules that cause inflammation in the body. This helps your blood vessels and heart operate more easily. Curtailing these molecules also regulates insulin production, which helps treat Type 2 diabetes.



PAY ATTENTION Improving your attention span can significantly boost memory because it strengthens neural networks in your brain. This in turn reduces the risk of degenerative problems such as dementia. In *Staying Sharp* (Simon & Schuster), the authors, Drs Henry Emmons and David Alter,

suggest a four-step plan to avoid getting distracted: Select – what is really worthy of your attention? Sustain – can you remain focused on what's needed? Suppress – ignore all of the unimportant 'noise'; and Shift – know when your attention is done on one thing, and move onto the next.

Sing out loud

Singing utilises muscles in your upper body, including your diaphragm at the bottom of your ribcage and the intercostals that run between your ribs. This helps to brace and strengthen your internal organs. In addition, when you take deep breaths in, as well as alternating controlled breaths out and bursts of forced exhaled sounds known as plosive breaths, it makes your lungs more dynamic and increases oxygen flow.



Stay flexible

Age is not a reason to become less nimble. Take a look at the world's oldest gymnast, 86-year-old Johanna Quaas from Germany, who can still swing herself around parallel bars with ease! Staying flexible keeps your joints in motion, meaning you've less chance of a debilitating fall later in life.



GO IN FOR THE KRILL

EPA and DHA fatty acids aid good brain function by promoting healthy cell membranes in your grey matter. Krill oil is a great source of both and it also contains astaxanthin, an antioxidant that ensures the EPA and DHA don't get broken down by your body before they can do their work. Try Vitabiotics Ultra Red Krill Oil (£14.95, vitabiotics.com).



Don't take life too seriously...

While a mix of healthy emotional and lifestyle habits will help you greatly in living a long and happy life, remember that a little bit of what you fancy does you good. American Susannah Mushatt Jones, who is 113, breakfasts on eggs and bacon each morning; Jeanne Calment from France, who lived to 122, loved daily port, cigarettes and chocolate; American Downing Jett Kay, who's 107, loves plenty of coffee; and Jennie Cascone (100) simply says 'keep on going... and have a good time!'. 🍷

WORDS: KATHERINE WATT. PHOTOGRAPHS: CORBIS, ISTOCK, SHUTTERSTOCK, REX FEATURES



THE POWER OF *friendship*

Hanging out, breaking the rules...
the experiences you had with your childhood friends
will have helped shape the person you are today.

DURING A RECENT playdate, my nearly three-year-old son seemed to spend more time fighting and arguing with his friend than playing. After an hour of intervening every time the pair of them quarrelled, I asked my son whether he was ready to go home. 'No,' came the response, 'I'm having fun.' Surprised, I pondered what friendship meant to him, and how my own childhood friendships have affected the ones I enjoy now.

It was only recently that psychologists discovered our first real friendships begin to develop around the age of three. And although these relationships are often

short-lived and quickly forgotten, they represent an emotional extreme. After all, beyond your family, the most important people in your life are likely to be your friends.

If you think back to your formative friendships – forged in the playground or the local park – and try to remember how they made you feel, you might recognise some of the sentiments that your adult friends elicit in you.

I distinctly recall my first friendships filling me with a sense of belonging and loyalty, as well as an appreciation of humour. While those particular relationships have long since faded, what has remained constant are the emotions that bond me to my grown-

up friends – we feel that we fit in together, we defend one another and we share a love of the ridiculous and enjoy making one another laugh.

Test your social skills

Who was the last friend you made? It may have been a colleague who gradually morphed from co-worker to good mate, the mother of your child's friend, or a woman you met through an evening class. Chances are it took a while, and several conversations, for your acquaintance to become a bona fide pal. It was certainly quicker and simpler when you were younger.

'Children make friends spontaneously. They have no apprehension about



turning to a playmate at school or in the playground and asking, "Will you be my friend?" They simply aren't as self-conscious as adults are,' says Irene Levine, professor of psychiatry at the New York University School of Medicine, who produces *TheFriendshipBlog.com*.

'Admittedly, these early social interactions can be somewhat primitive, but they offer opportunities for children to hone the skills of friendship.

'These skills include the ability to deal with conflict by learning to defend their point of view, but also sometimes give in, as well as teaching them how to set and maintain rules.

Broaden your horizons

'In addition to learning how to handle conflicts, childhood friendships teach us how to communicate, share and negotiate,' adds Irene. Quarrels over teddies and slices of birthday cake in the playground are rehearsals for adult disagreements about things such as political opinions.

With your friend by your side, you discover for the first time that you're not completely reliant on the help of adults. All at once, there is someone

who lives in the same small world, someone who understands why the yellow scooter at nursery is the only toy worth playing with, and why it's important that you ride it as often as possible. Together with your friend, you feel stronger, more confident and competent. And, perhaps also for the first time, the rest of the world takes you seriously.

'Childhood friendships offer you the opportunity to see how other people outside your family live and interact,' says Irene. 'Through these friendships, you are introduced to a world that's larger than that of your immediate family. You discover new role models who can shape the way you behave.'

Beyond these spheres of influence, these early friendships can also have a surprising effect on school performance. Studies have shown junior school pupils who have friends, and are liked, achieve better academic results than classmates who are socially isolated. So companionship can make us more successful, even at a young age.

'Friendships during childhood help us learn that someone outside of our

Child's play

It's easy to re-live the positive lessons of your early childhood friendships. Here's how...

- Reminisce about happy times from your past to generate good feelings today. Look back at old photos of you and your friends and watch the films you enjoyed to reconnect with the person you once were.

- Think about your formative childhood pals. What was it that drew you together? Is there a way of adding an element of that to your life now? You might have enjoyed dance classes together but no longer dance, so why not go to an 80s disco night and dance like no-one's watching?

- Children are often more fearless than adults, which is why they form friendships more easily. If you've been feeling isolated, why not strike up a conversation with someone new? If you're on 'nodding terms' with a fellow gym member, why not ask them for a juice afterwards? If they say no you've lost nothing; if they agree, you may have taken the first step to a beautiful friendship.

family chooses and accepts us,' says friendship coach Jan Yager, author of *Friendship Thoughts, Famous Quotes, and a Journal* (Hannacroix Creek Books). It's a powerful lesson.

'I've interviewed dozens of women who've shared how childhood friends shaped, and continue to influence, their attitudes towards friendship. Put simply, I've discovered that if you had positive friendships as a child, you're going to be more open to forming valuable platonic relationships later in life.'

It's clear that our friendships, from those first fledgling relationships based on play, to our adult alliances founded on more complex needs, are incredibly powerful and can be immensely positive influences on our lives. Our pals give us confidence, help us navigate the trickier aspects of life and teach us to share, communicate and negotiate. And spiritually they can give us wings, encouraging us to fulfil our potential.

Friendships during childhood help us learn that someone outside of our family accepts us.

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THERAPIST'S TOOLBOX

NEW
SERIESSTAY IN
CONTROL

In the second of our series on life improving therapies, discover how to harness your 'locus of control'.

MUCH AS WE MIGHT LIKE TO, we can't control the passing of time. Whether you embrace it or resent it, getting older is inevitable. Ageing comes with its challenges, but it has its own rewards too, and your ability to get the most out of life, whatever your age, will absolutely depend on your attitude towards it.

The 'locus of control' is a concept developed by American psychologist Julian B Rotter in 1956. It looks at the extent to which you feel you have control over your life and whether your destiny depends on you, or outside forces. Someone with an 'internal locus' will believe they are the main influence on how life turns out. If you have an 'external locus' you are more likely to believe in luck, fate or circumstance. If you have a strong external locus, there's a risk of developing a 'victim' mentality.

Developing a positive attitude to life's inevitable changes calls for balance. There are some things that can't be controlled by us, and feeling we should be able to do that will only lead to anxiety or depression. This quote, from the *Serenity Prayer*, by theologian Reinhold Niebuhr sums it up: 'Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.'

FURTHER INFORMATION

Find out where you are on the 'Locus of control' scale at cbtoxford.co.uk.

5 EASY WAYS
TO DEVELOP YOUR
INTERNAL LOCUS

Whatever difficulties you face, or fears you have about the future, there's always something you can do to improve things, and it's often the little things that make a difference...

1 Try new things. Evidence shows that by including lots of new experiences, no matter how small, gives the illusion of time passing more slowly.

2 Let go of regrets. You can't change the past, but you can change how you view it. See it as part of life's rich experience. Decide there'll be no more recriminations and forgive yourself and others.

3 Look after yourself. This should be your number one priority. Regular exercise and good nutrition are key to staying well. Incorporate enjoyable exercise and healthy food choices into the fabric of your life, creating new habits. If not now, then when?

4 Think about what you can do, not what you can't. You can't turn back the clock, but ask yourself 'what would I be doing if I didn't know how old I was?' Are you assuming it's too late? Novelist George Eliot said: 'It's never too late to be what you might have been'. It's unlikely you'll become an astronaut if you're 45, but are you sure it's totally impossible? Look at 54-year-old singer and actress Sarah Brightman who is training for a mission to the International Space Station in order to fulfil her lifelong dream!

5 Live mindfully. Most of the time we're not present in our lives, we're looking into the future or dwelling on the past. So, live as if your life matters right now, and see each day as a new beginning. This will help keep stress under control, and help you stay healthy in body and mind.

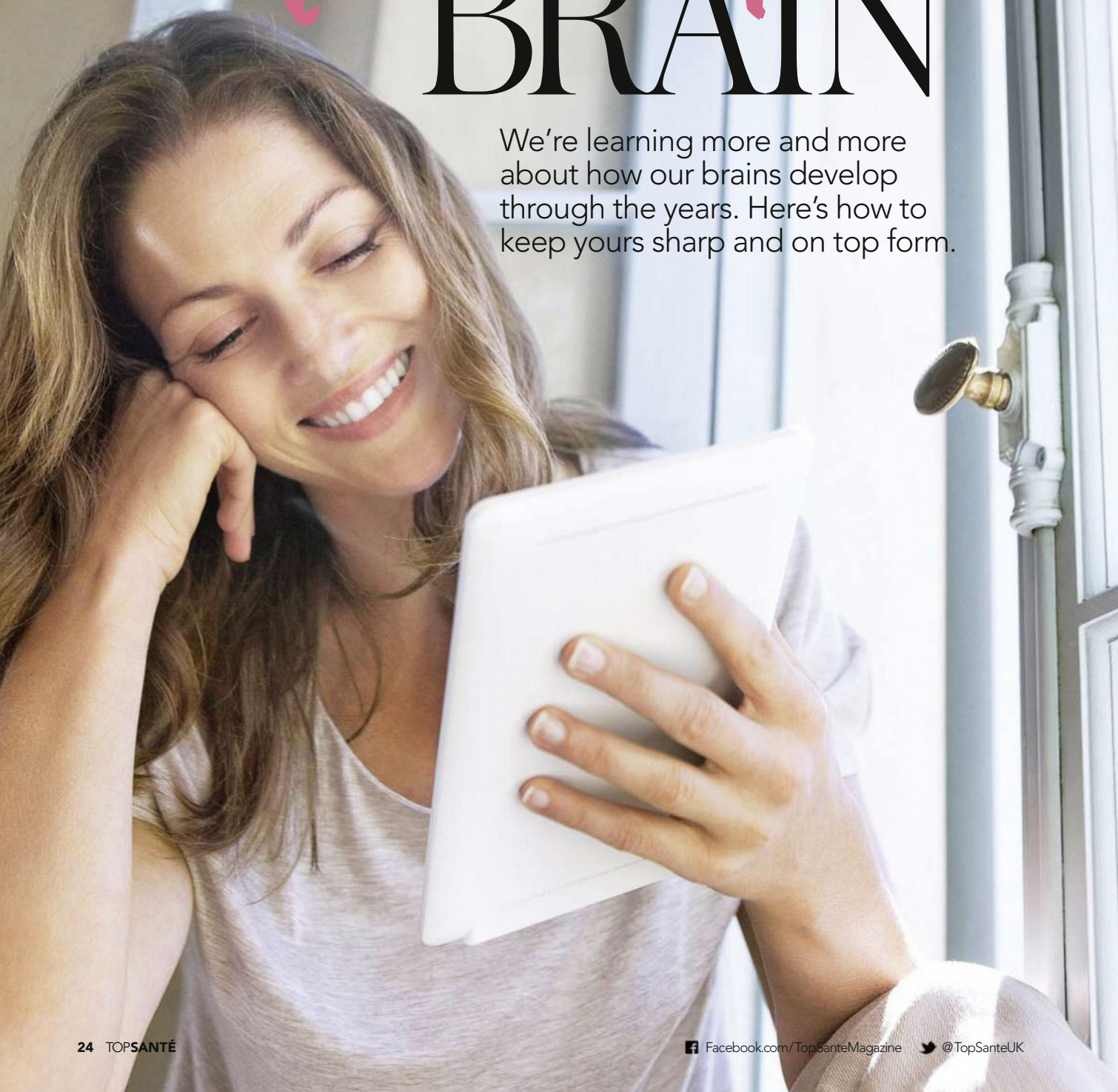
There are lots of examples of people who have overcome huge obstacles, and they've done this because of a strong internal locus of control. Learning to control the controllables will help you feel in charge, whatever age you are, but let go of anything you can't change. Since change is inevitable, having faith in your ability to handle it and staying positive will mean living a happier, perhaps longer, life!

NEXT MONTH We look at how you can identify and manage your stress 'drivers'.



Your *youthful* BRAIN

We're learning more and more about how our brains develop through the years. Here's how to keep yours sharp and on top form.



IN OUR QUEST TO STAY youthful we apply creams to our faces, cut calories for our waistlines and increase exercise for heart health. But how much attention do we give to our brains? That 3lb mass of grey matter, hidden away inside your skull, is what makes you intrinsically you. It controls motor functions that define your mannerisms, the hippocampus forms your memories, the temporal lobe forms the way you listen and communicate, and the rest of your brain holds a multitude of neural pathways that are intrinsic to your personality.

‘Your brain is a life-long learning organ, designed to support and engage you throughout your ever-changing lifetime,’ say Drs Henry Emmons and David Alter, authors of *Staying Sharp* (Simon & Schuster). ‘When you age, particular learning processes change too.’

Changes in your neurons, also known as your nerve cells, and synapses, which are the junctions between two nerve cells, are constantly changing as you engage in different activities or environments. And while many of you might assume that your later years will lead to your brain becoming less active, this isn’t necessarily the case.

‘Early in life, your brain hungrily absorbs every new experience, largely processing them in the right hemisphere,’ say Drs Emmons and Alter. ‘These are encoded throughout your brain network as patterns that can be recognised and reproduced in the future. Those patterns may be in the form of language, spatial relationships, or functional procedures.’

‘With advancing age, we rely more heavily on those stored patterns. Meanwhile, the left side of the brain assumes a bigger role, since this is where most language-based learning

is stored. The wisdom we have in our later years reflects our ability to draw upon decades of accumulated experience. This wisdom appears to grow with advancing age, as long as we maintain a good foundation of physical and emotional health.’

Embrace positive change

For the first time in the UK, there are now more people aged 60-plus than there are under 18, with three million people over the age of 80. And while increased age means some people will get symptoms of age-related brain problems, such as dementia, there are a large number of older people who are ageing positively, heralding an exciting era of understanding how our incredible brains carry on working.

That’s not to say you won’t still forget a name or find your attention drifting. ‘The speed at which you access words, ideas and learn new information slows down with age, mirroring the slowing of your physical abilities. But these changes are normal.’

‘We might say a young brain’s job is to make sense of the world, while an older brain is better able to translate what has been learned into living with greater meaning, rewarding purpose and connections to others.’

Connecting with others also gets easier as you get older. A study in *Psychological Science* found the brain’s ability to evaluate other people’s emotional states didn’t peak until 40 or 50. Understanding emotions better helps you empathise with other people – a vital interactive skill that keeps neural pathways strong.

‘Practicing empathy skills regulates your mind, promoting contentment and calmness. In your older years this means you feel more confident in engaging with other people, and therefore build stronger, mutually beneficial relationships.’

Nourish your neurons

The extent to which nutrition benefits your brain is vast. Our learning, function speed, memory, stress levels, grey matter-building, mood and much more are all influenced by what we eat and drink. ‘Diet plays a vital impact on brain health – for good or for ill. And science is homing in on how a well-nourished brain sets you up for a vibrant long life.’

A pioneering study in Sweden proved that dietary tweaks improved cell function in the hippocampus, as well as

How your brain changes with age

INFANCY

When you’re born, only the basic brain nerves for survival are firing, such as your reflexes. A rapid period of growth then follows. Your brain quadruples in size over the first four years of life as new stimuli forms synapses.

CHILDHOOD

In early childhood, myelination is constant. This process allows nerve cells to transmit information faster to build more complex brain processes. Neurons settle into pathways depending on your environment, e.g whether it’s happy or fearful. Personality traits develop as a result.

ADOLESCENCE

Myelination in the frontal lobes is complete by adolescence, and the speed at which you process new information is at its fastest. The pre-frontal cortex begins to branch out as concepts of judgement and reasoning develop. The amygdala, which regulates emotions, is less developed, making you sensitive to emotions.

EARLY ADULTHOOD

Your brain reaches adulthood in your 20s. Neuron growth slows, and between the ages of 45-49 your capacity for short-term memory, such as facial recognition, slows too. However, your social and emotional skills are growing stronger.

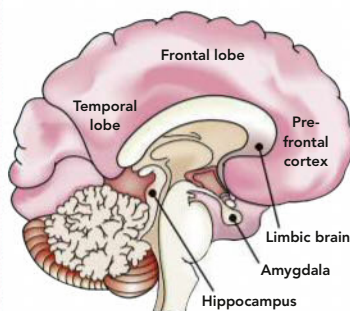
MID ADULTHOOD

Total accumulation of knowledge is at its peak. In other words, you’re the wisest you’ve been.

LATE ADULTHOOD

After the age of 70 your limbic brain is at its strongest. Your neural pathways have stronger links to the amygdala, giving you better emotional and social responses. Your intelligence peaks, drawing on a lifetime of accumulated knowledge from your long-term memory. However, at this point your short-term memory needs active exercise to keep it firing!

Your brain up close





*Make the
healthier choice
80% of the time
and you're going
in the right
direction for good
brain health*

and eating fatty acids helps to promote lipid function. This delays cognitive decline and, in particular, boosts memory and learning. 'It's said that our ancestors, who had far fewer illnesses than we do today, got more than two thirds of their calories from healthy fats.'

Be guided by Mother Nature

Mother Nature provides all we need to eat a brain-healthy, wholefood diet of fruit, veg, grains, meat and dairy. Eat these in as natural a state as possible – if you can't pronounce the long list of ingredients on the label, avoid it!

'The food industry makes processed food taste good, usually by adding trans fats and sugar. But sugar contributes to one of the greatest threats to your brain's long-term health – high blood glucose.'

One prominent theory of why we age focuses on a group of harmful compounds called advanced glycation end products (AGEs), which are linked to high blood sugar. AGEs are sugar-derived substances that form into proteins or lipids, often as a result of high heat levels. They're implicated in age-related disorders, such as heart disease and Alzheimer's.

High blood sugar has also been shown to shrink the hippocampus, increase stress and provoke brain cell-damaging inflammation.

You can cut sugar significantly by avoiding obvious sources such as confectionary, processed food and fruit juices, as well as being mindful of hidden sugar. For example, a 150g serving of low-fat fruit yoghurt has five teaspoons, while tomato soup has four. But eating for brain health isn't about rigid rules.

learning, sensory and motor functions. Researchers gave test subjects a microbiobal and enzyme supplement, and after five months, subjects who had these supplements had far better cognitive development than those on a standard diet. But we don't need a science lab to ensure our brains are getting the right food.

'To support your brain as you age, simply ensure your diet has plenty of variation, mixing plant-based foods, healthy fats and protein, fibre and probiotics,' say Drs Emmons and Alter.

Of particular importance when we age are fatty acids, which are found in oily fish, such as mackerel and salmon. Your brain relies on lipids, which are fats that make healthy cell membranes,

STAY SHARP WITH SUPPLEMENTS

While a balanced diet will provide your brain with nutrients, you can boost the essential ones with these synapse-friendly supplements:

- Viridian Nutrition's **COGNITIVE COMPLEX** has brain-boosting vitamins, including Co-enzyme Q10 for cell health (£29.95, 60 capsules, viridian-nutrition.com).
- Equazen **EYE Q MIND** contains essential fatty acids for memory, B vitamins for cognition, zinc for memory, and magnesium for

nervous system function (£15.99 for 30 capsules, boots.com).

- Efamol **ENVIROMEGA** provides a vegetarian source of omega-3 through algal oil. It contains DHA and EPA levels of 409mg per capsule, as well as 5mg of vitamin E to slow cognitive decline (£11.99

for 60 capsules, boots.com).



'Many diets fail as they are too restrictive, but if you're making the healthier choice up to 70 or 80 per cent of the time, you're going in the right direction for good brain health. It's OK to have a day off sometimes!'

Stay active for brain health

The natural partner to a good diet is exercise, and it keeps your brain firing too. A US study found that cognitive performance and neuroplasticity, the process that makes new and altered neural connections, was better in older adults who kept up their cardiovascular fitness, including those with mild Alzheimer's. Even low-intensity exercise, such as walking for half an hour a day, was shown to improve neural integrity in the space of just six months.

'Staying in motion makes the brain bigger, stronger and faster. It normalises blood sugar, protects brain cells from free radical oxidation, and boosts growth of brain cells by producing a protective protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF).

'Think of BDNF as a fertiliser for your brain. When you plant a new neuron in the soil of the brain, BDNF nurtures the root, creating richer networks.'

In fact many brain disorders, including age-related Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, plus depression and anxiety, are linked to low levels of BDNF. Doctors recommend that people over the age of 60 should do a brisk walk or run for half an hour, four times a week, as well as do two half-hour sessions of muscle building exercises.

Sleep for sharper synapses

Just as movement is important, so is rest. 'Sleep is among the most powerful means to promote mood, memory and healing. It regulates your internal clock, which helps your body respond appropriately to different daily demands, and, most importantly, it cleans out your brain ready for the next day.'

As your body rests, energy goes into tidying the connection between your deep brain and frontal cortex. This helps the amygdala operate properly – an almond-shaped structure in the temporal lobe that regulates emotion. If you don't sleep well, you'll feel groggy, snappy, and slow-witted. This is because your brain diverts all its energy into performing basic functions, so activity in what it sees as non-essential

STOCK UP ON BRAIN-BOOSTING SUPER FOODS

Everything you eat has a direct effect on your brain's health. Here are just some of the brain-boosting foods you can incorporate into your diet.

- **Walnuts:** These contain healthy protein, fats and antioxidants, which act as neuroprotective compounds for memory and brain function. Aim for at least seven a day.
- **Blackberries:** These little berries have antioxidants known as polyphenols, which soothe inflammation and help neurons communicate with each other. Aim for a handful (10 berries) a day.
- **Citrus fruits:** Fruits such as lemon and lime contain flavonoids that combat oxidative stress, keeping brain cells healthy. Aim for one piece of grapefruit, orange, or the juice of one lemon a day.
- **Salmon:** This oily fish is an excellent source of fatty acids, which coat your brain cells with protective DHA. Eat at least two portions of oily fish a week.
- **Avocado:** As well as being a healthy source of fat, avocados contain folate, which improves memory function. Eat one or two a week.
- **Red cabbage:** Full of vitamin K, red cabbage helps to form a myelin sheath around nerves to protect them from damage and decay. Add a 90g serving to meals two or three times a week.
- **Olive oil:** A healthy source of fat, antioxidants and vitamin E, which prevents cognitive decline, olive oil is an excellent source of brain lubrication. Pour two tablespoons a day on food.
- **Cinnamon and turmeric:** Research has shown that components in these spices inhibit the proteins that cause Alzheimer's. Aim for 2-3 teaspoons a week.
- **Apples:** The phytonutrient quercetin is found in apples, which helps protect brain cells. Eat one a day to keep the doctor away!
- **Eggs:** Eggs are a good source of vitamin B12, which helps reduce brain shrinkage. Eat at least three a week.
- **Shellfish:** Food such as prawns, crab, oysters and mussels are good sources of zinc, which improves spatial working memory. Aim for a 140g portion (fist size) twice a week.



areas, such as the interior frontal gyrus, which controls divergent thinking, slows down. This nocturnal clean-up operation also declutters memory storage in the hippocampus, sorting important memories from false or trivial ones.

To get decent sleep, go to bed and get up at regular times each day. This will get your body into a rhythm that's regulated in the brain by the suprachiasmatic nucleus, otherwise known as your internal body clock. You can also try mind-body exercises to help you get a peaceful night's sleep. We love the Oasis of Calm's *Sounds of the English Summer/Surf and Waves* double disc set (£6.95, amazon.co.uk).

Get yourself connected

Lastly, you can keep your brain sharp with mental exercise. 'Your brain carries within it the accumulated experience of your lifetime.

'To efficiently collect and maintain this, you constantly rewire – creating new neural pathways, and reinforcing older ones. That adaptive flexibility is the hallmark of a youthful and vital brain,' say Drs Emmons and Alter.

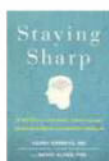
A major way to get these neural pathways connecting is through curiosity. 'People who remain curious and open to new experiences tend to lead longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives.

'Exploring things that are novel, playful or intriguing connects the knowledge circuits of the left brain with the pattern-seeking circuits of the right brain.'

Some good ways to pique your curiosity are to read an engaging novel, learn a new language, take a new walking route or attempt some mind puzzles. See right for quick and easy brain boosters you can do right now.

One of the results of trying new activities is that reward pathways in your brain are activated. This makes you feel optimistic, spurring you on to seek more new experiences, which creates and strengthens yet more neural pathways.

In *Staying Sharp*, Emmons and Alter combine Western knowledge with Eastern wisdom in their approach to maintaining a healthy brain, through areas of movement, rest, nourishment, curiosity, flexibility, optimism, empathy, connections and authenticity. See stayingsharp.org.



Quick & easy brain boosters

The following exercises may look simple enough, but they'll fire up your neural pathways and help your brain stay sharper for longer.

1 COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Using the clues given below, make the necessary comparisons to calculate the right answer.

1. Your children are racing in the backyard. Jimmy beats Cathy and Melanie beats Patrick. If Patrick beats Jimmy, what is the outcome of the race?

1ST PLACE _____

2ND PLACE _____

3RD PLACE _____

4TH PLACE _____

2. Your children are measuring their heights. Tom is taller than Sally, but he is not taller than Lucy. Amber is not as tall as Sally. What is their order of height?

1ST (TALLEST) _____

2ND _____

3RD _____

4TH (SHORTEST) _____

2 DISCOVER THE PATTERN

Determine the number sequence pattern and fill in the gaps. You may use a calculator for this exercise.

1. 1, 4, 5, 9, 14, 23, __, __, __.

2. 5, 8, 12, 17, 23, __, __, __.

3. 60, 58, 54, 48, 40, __, __.

4. 8, 10, 20, 32, 54, __, __, __.

5. 14, 56, 224, 896, __, __, __.

6. 5, 15, 30, 90, 180, __, __.

From *Keep Your Brain Stronger For Longer: 201 Brain Exercises For People with Mild Cognitive Impairment* (The Experiment) © Tonia Vojtkofsky, 2015. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. Available wherever books are sold. www.theexperimentpublishing.com



5 WHAT IS THIS CALLED?

Use the clue to determine what is being described.

1. A plush toy that children love to hug
2. This is made by stitching together squares of fabric and padding
3. A two-wheeled means of transportation
4. A petrified artifact found deep in the ground
5. These insects make a rhythmical chirping sound
6. This leisurely sport requires a line and pole

6 ORDERED LETTERS

Pick the one statement that is **WRONG**.

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. ASZCV | 3. HJMOK |
| a) Z is in the middle. | a) J is to the left of H. |
| b) C is after Z. | b) M is third. |
| c) V is at the end. | c) O is between M and K. |
| d) S is between Z and C. | d) J is to the right of H. |
| 2. BNDFG | 4. LPTUI |
| a) N is second. | a) U is between P and I. |
| b) F is between D and G. | b) P is second. |
| c) F is last. | c) L is before P. |
| d) D is in the middle. | d) T is fourth. |

3 MATCHING CLUES

Match two of the word-parts to make a word that fits the clue.

1. ot ree deg ru
sir tar de en

a fortune-teller's cards

a temperature unit

a warning horn

unmannerly

2. st la ra ep
re rp te ta

not common

a stair

a canvas cover

tardy

4 WORD PROBLEMS

Try to do the maths in your head first, then use a pen if needed (no calculators!).

1. Four children are playing at your house. You have a pack of 30 stickers for them. How many stickers does each child get if you divide them up evenly? How many stickers are left over? _____
2. Your book club meets once a month and the next book is 580 pages. How many pages do you have to read each day to have it completed by your next meeting if this month has 30 days? _____
3. Your family of 18 is coming to you for Christmas. There are seven kids and 11 adults. You all decide you'll spend £20 on each child and half that amount on each adult. How much will you spend on family, not including your spouse? _____

ANSWERS: 1. 1) 1st Melanie, 2nd Patrick, 3rd Jimmy, 4th Cathy; 2) 1st Lucy, 2nd Tom, 3rd Sally, 4th Amber; 2. 1) 37, 60, 97, 157 - each number is the sum of the 2 preceding numbers; 2) 30, 38, 47, 57, add 3, add 4, add 5, add 6; 3) 18, 4; subtract 2, subtract 4, subtract 6, subtract 8; 4) 88, 144, 234, 380; add the 2 preceding numbers plus 2; 5) 3, 584, 14,336, 57,344; multiply by 4 each step; 6) 540, 1,080, 3,240, 6,480; multiply by 3, multiply by 2. 3. 1) Tarot, Degree, Siren, Rude; 2) Rare, Step, Tarp, Late. 4. 1) 7 stickers each, 2 are left over; 2) 19 pages for 20 days and 20 pages for 10 days; 3) £250. 5. 1) Teddy bear; 2) Quilt; 3) Bicycle; 4) Fossil; 5) Cricket or grasshopper; 6) Fishing.

NATURE'S anti-agers

Take a look in Mother Nature's medicine cabinet and you'll find a host of powerful plants to keep you looking and feeling your best.

PROBLEM: Risk of stroke
SOLUTION: Citrus fruits

The flavanones in citrus fruits can lower your risk of stroke. A study in the journal *Stroke* followed 69,622 women for 14 years and found women who ate high amounts of oranges, grapefruits and lemons had a 19 per cent lower risk of stroke than those who consumed the least.

Flavanones, which are compounds that give plants their colour and affect their taste, work by reducing inflammation, helping blood flow through vessels more smoothly.

Strokes are caused by clots and ruptures in the brain, which are significantly prevented as long as

you're a healthy weight, stay active and don't smoke, all of which help to maintain a healthy blood flow. However, after 65 your risk increases as your arteries harden.

Again, it's citrus fruits that can help this symptom. High in vitamin C, they're natural antioxidants for your body's cells. Antioxidants slow the progression of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), and prevent free radicals, which come from environmental pollution and inflammation in the body, from depositing plaque in your arteries.

PROBLEM: Brittle nails
SOLUTION: Apricot oil

Keeping your nails strong and supple couldn't be easier with apricot oil. Oestrogen levels fluctuate with age, which dehydrates your body, leading to dry, brittle and discoloured nails. You can reverse these effects or avoid them by using nourishing apricot oil morning and night. Massage the oil, such as Essie Apricot Cuticle Oil (£8.99, boots.com), into your cuticles and around the nail bed.

You could also help your nails by boosting the production of keratin – the natural beauty nutrient. Keratin acts as a growth accelerator for healthy hair and strong nails. It's produced in your body from amino acids when you eat protein and biotin-rich food, for example egg yolk, oatmeal, soybeans, mushrooms and almonds.

Or, take a supplement, such as Swanson Keratin, (£4.99 for 60 capsules, healthmonthly.co.uk).

**HERBS
THAT HEAL**

Written herbal remedies date back more than 5,000 years. Sumerians referred to more than 250 plants for drug preparation, such as poppy, henbane and mandrake.

PROBLEM: Rheumatism
SOLUTION: Frankincense

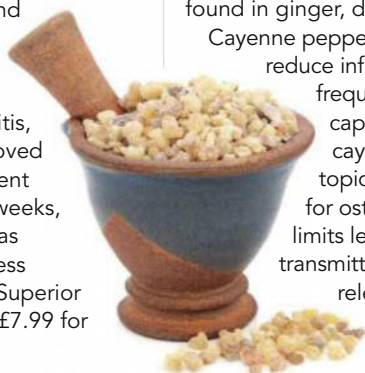
The resin of Indian frankincense (Salai Guggal) contains large amounts of boswellic acids, which are powerful plant-based anti-inflammatories. It's well known as a joint-protecting herb in Ayurvedic medicine, and now Western trials have confirmed its efficacy.

In studies on patients suffering from osteoarthritis, this natural remedy improved symptoms in 60-70 per cent of participants. After six weeks, swelling reduced, pain was alleviated and joint stiffness decreased. Try Swanson Superior Herbs Boswellia Serrata (£7.99 for

120 capsules, healthmonthly.co.uk).

Another natural anti-inflammatory for your joints is turmeric. It contains a protein called curcumin, which helps stop immune-system responses to inflammation. Gingerol and shogaol, found in ginger, do the same thing.

Cayenne pepper is also used to reduce inflammation. Doctors frequently prescribe capsaicin cream, a cayenne pepper-based topical treatment, for osteoarthritis, as it limits levels of pain-transmitting chemicals released from nearby nerve cells.



PROBLEM: Heartburn and indigestion
SOLUTION: Juniper berries

Bitter-tasting juniper berries act as an astringent. When the fruits are consumed your saliva production is increased. In turn, your levels of digestive enzymes and stomach acid go up, helping you break down food faster. This means you're less likely to suffer from acid rising back up your oesophagus, causing heartburn. Although these symptoms can

strike at any age, it's more serious as you get older, as repeated acid wear in your throat and oesophagus can cause acid reflux disease, sometimes leading to hernias or even cancer.

If you already suffer from acid reflux, try a spoonful of slippery elm in a glass of milk. This tree extract adds a mucous lining to your stomach, protecting it from harmful acid. Try Thompsons Unmalted Slippery Elm (£5.65 for 454g, hollandandbarrett.com).



PROBLEM: Liver function
SOLUTION: Sea buckthorn

You've probably seen sea buckthorn bushes dotted around the east coast of England and Scotland. But this plant does more than just cheer up coastlines with its orange berries – it also lends itself



to repairing your body. The leaves contain an extract that's 'hepatoprotective', helping to protect your liver from damage.

Compared to when we're in our 20s, blood flow to our liver reduces by the time we reach our 60s by up to 50 per cent. This can make it vulnerable to damage from chemicals, viruses or alcohol. Try Natures Aid Omega-7 Sea Buckthorn Oil (£11.99 for 90 capsules, healthmonthly.co.uk).

Another natural hepatoprotective is moringa, which is increasing in popularity as a superfood. It comes from the African *moringaceae* plant. Try Aduna's Moringa Green Superleaf Powder (£7.99 for 100g, hollandandbarrett.com), which adds an earthy freshness to smoothies, salads or soups.

PROBLEM: Menopause
SOLUTION: St John's Wort

St John's Wort has long been known as a herbal remedy for low moods, and now studies have shown it works in several ways to combat menopause symptoms. Compounds found in St John's Wort, called phytoestrogens – similar to the oestrogen that fluctuates during menopause – can help reduce night sweats and hot flushes. Trials of women taking the herb showed that these symptoms decreased from four episodes per day, to fewer than two per day after a few weeks.

This, in combination with its ability to quell mood swings and irritability, makes it a perfect natural menopause tonic. Try Schwabe Pharma's Menomood (£16.99 for 30 capsules, hollandandbarrett.com). It's a combination of St John's Wort extract and Black Cohosh root extract, which is a type of buttercup, native to North America that's also said to regulate oestrogenic activity.

PROBLEM: Heart disease
SOLUTION: Garlic

Garlic has been used as a cure-all for centuries. Its compounds help fight cancer cells, its antioxidants protect against free radicals, and its antibiotic properties help fight bacteria and viruses. Most recently though, scientists have been looking at the way in which garlic, affectionately known as 'the stinking rose', affects heart health.

One of the main compounds in garlic, allicin, reacts with your body's red



blood cells to produce hydrogen sulphide. This makes your blood vessels more relaxed, keeping your heart functioning properly.

Cardiovascular disease is the main cause of death in the UK, affecting one in 10 women, but it's far more likely if you're overweight, unfit, or have high cholesterol.

Garlic can help lower the latter. In tests where participants were given up to a gram of garlic powder a day, total cholesterol levels were lowered by up to 20 mg/dL.



St John's Wort contains phytoestrogens to reduce menopausal symptoms.

PROBLEM: *Cracked, sore lips*
SOLUTION: *Aloe vera*

Aloe vera is a fleshy plant, originally from northern Africa and now a common UK houseplant, as well as a popular health and beauty ingredient.

Dehydration and a decrease in collagen production as you get older makes you more prone to dried, cracked lips.

This medicinal plant contains around 250 individual substances. The ones that come into play when restoring lip health are choline, which combats itching and dryness, lignin, which penetrates the

skin to help increase collagen synthesis, and saponins, which help to disinfect and heal. Try Forever Living's Aloe Lips with jojoba and beeswax (£2 for a 15oz tube, foreverliving.com).

The curative properties of aloe vera give a boost to hair health too, due to a component called mucopolysaccharides. This has moisturising properties to soften your scalp and improve circulation to boost hair growth. Try Dr Organic Aloe Vera Shampoo (£5.49 for 250ml, hollandandbarrett.com).

Try taking aloe internally, too, with Forever Living Gel drink (£20.80 for 1 litre, foreverliving.com).

**PROBLEM:** *UV damage*
SOLUTION: *Rosehip seeds*

Rosehips are the only seeds in nature to contain high amounts of retinol from vitamin A. Retinol helps your skin cells to renew more rapidly, making rosehip oil ideal for dealing with UV damage, such as sun spots and discolouration. The sun's rays account for around 80 per cent of skin ageing, but sunscreen that has a UVA star rating of 4 or 5, as well as a SPF factor of 30 or more, will offer protection.

After you've been in the sun, smooth on some Sukin Rose Hip Oil, made from wild Chilean rosehips (£12.10 for 25ml, feelunique.com), to help nourish your skin.

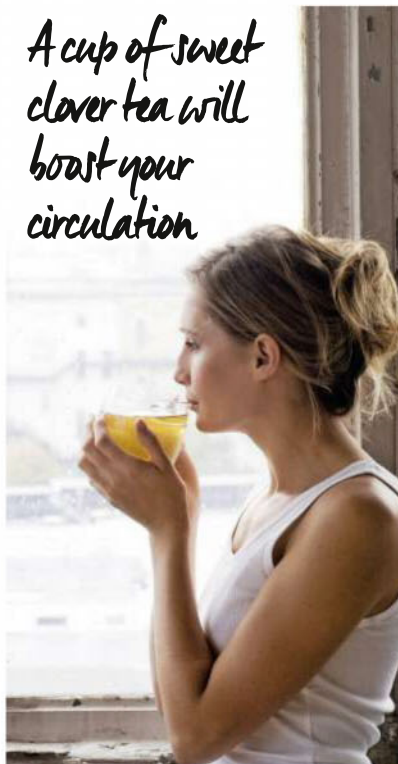
Rosehips are one of the best plant sources of vitamin C, so the oil packs an antioxidant punch as well. This protects your skin against free radicals – another cause of ageing skin.

They also contain omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, which hydrate the surface of your skin. On a deeper, cellular level, they help with repair and regeneration, making your skin more resistant to UV damage and giving you a more youthful appearance.

**THE ORIGINAL
TOP SANTÉ**

The Ancient Egyptian *Kahoun Papyrus* is the earliest known literature on natural health remedies. Dating from 1950BC and written in cursive and pictorial hieroglyphs, it covers issues such as rheumatism, gynaecological health, vein health, tumours, breast and heart problems and digestion.

*A cup of sweet
clover tea will
boost your
circulation*

**PROBLEM:** *Sluggish veins*
SOLUTION: *Sweet clover*

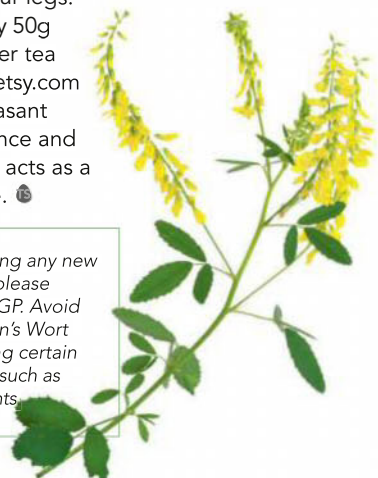
Sweet clover is a natural anticoagulant, helping your blood flow more freely. It also helps your lymphatic system, which drains toxins and waste from your body.

With age, veins begin to lose elasticity. The valves inside them become less efficient too, particularly if you do a lot of standing, heavy lifting or are overweight.

Varicose veins, spider veins, cramps and poor circulation can all be treated with sweet clover. Try a tea made from its dried, crushed leaves to increase the flow of blood between your heart and veins, and move excess fluid that's built up in your legs.

You can buy 50g of sweet clover tea for £1.84 on etsy.com – it has a pleasant vanilla fragrance and the herb also acts as a mild sedative. 🍵

● Before taking any new medication, please consult your GP. Avoid taking St John's Wort if you're taking certain medications, such as antidepressants.



ADVENTURE*

*BUMPS AND BRUISES INCLUDED

Soothes your skin and relieves bruises naturally.
The natural way to bounce back.

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A topical herbal remedy traditionally used in the symptomatic treatment of bruises. Always read the label.
Available from selected Boots, Holland & Barrett, all good supermarkets and independent retailers. Go to www.arnicare.co.uk to find out more.

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FUTURE-PROOF
YOUR HEALTH

Turn the pressure down

NEW
SERIES

Keeping your blood pressure in check is a sure-fire way to stay healthy – and it's not hard to do.

OVER THE YEARS THE CHANCES ARE you'll have your blood pressure checked many times. The reading it gives will show just how hard your heart is working to pump blood around your body.

The test couldn't be simpler and is done at your GP's surgery or pharmacy. A cuff is placed around your arm and inflated to restrict blood flow. The pressure is then gradually released as your pulse is checked to produce a two-number measurement.

The top number indicates systolic pressure – the pressure of the blood against the artery walls when your heart pumps blood out. The bottom number measures diastolic pressure – the pressure when your heart is at rest. It's the top number that gives the best indication of the risk to your heart.

Ideally, the reading should

be below 120/80. This means your body's working efficiently. If it's 140/90 or higher, you have high blood pressure. If it's above 120/80 but below 140/90, you have 'pre-hypertension', which means you risk high blood pressure unless you take steps to lower it.

Even if the bottom number stays below 90, a top number of 140 or above suggests you have an increased risk of heart attack or stroke. This is known as 'isolated systolic hypertension'.

To ensure an accurate reading, try to avoid anything that could trigger a temporary hike in blood pressure, such as leaving late and having to rush to the appointment. It's also a good idea to empty your bladder beforehand: the fuller your bladder, the higher your systolic blood pressure reading.

TWEAK YOUR DIET

Healthy blood pressure starts with good nutrition. Cutting down on trans fats and sugar will help keep your weight in check, which in turn reduces hypertension.

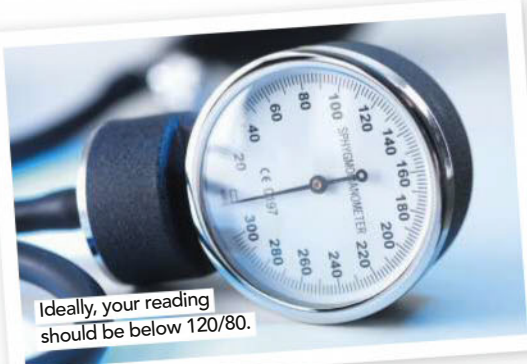
But salt is arguably the biggest potential problem. The evidence linking it to high blood pressure is as strong as that linking smoking to lung cancer, according to pressure group Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH).

Eating too much salt affects your kidneys, leading to water retention, which causes blood pressure to soar. 'Our sensitivity to salt tends to increase as we age,' says Professor Gareth Beevers



10%

is the percentage by which a daily garlic supplement could reduce blood pressure



Ideally, your reading should be below 120/80.

Between five and seven million people in the UK are living with undiagnosed hypertension. So regular checks are vital.

from Blood Pressure UK. 'A 50-year-old can't safely consume as much as a 20-year-old might be able to. We actually need less than 2g salt per day for our bodies to function properly.'

'Current guidelines state we should eat no more than 6g. But most of us eat far more than this as it's hidden in processed foods, such as bread and cereals. So read the label – anything that contains 1.5g salt or more per 100g should be avoided.'

If you're a fan of the salt shaker though, there is a remedy. Potassium is salt's biggest enemy as it balances out sodium. It helps kidneys filter waste products from the body, counteracting the effects of the fluid retention caused by salt. Good sources include bananas, sweet potatoes and fresh tuna.

Drinking too much alcohol also causes a temporary hike in blood pressure, putting more strain on the heart. The Department of Health says women who regularly consume more than six units a day – around two 175ml glasses of wine – double their risk of developing high blood pressure, compared to those who drink within safe limits.

So now you know what to avoid, what about the blood pressure friendly foods you can enjoy? Well, eating more fruit and veg in general has been proven to help lower blood pressure – so don't just stop at five-a-day!

Adding nitrate-rich veg, such as beetroot and leafy greens to your diet lowers your blood pressure. These foods are converted to nitric oxide in your body, which works by causing blood vessels to dilate. Bear in mind though that dietary nitrate is water-soluble, so it's best to steam or roast veg, or eat it raw, rather than boil it.

Chopped or crushed garlic releases an active ingredient called allicin, which alters hormone levels in the kidneys, causing blood vessels to widen, thereby reducing pressure. Much of garlic's allicin content is destroyed during cooking, so try a supplement as well, such as Kwai Garlic (£14.50 for 100 tablets, hollandandbarrett.com).

A recent review, published in the journal *Complete Nutrition*, said a daily garlic

2
*is the number,
in grammes, that
we need of salt
per day*



20
*minutes of sun
every day
provides UVA,
which reduces
blood pressure*



supplement could reduce blood pressure by 10 per cent.

Finally, aim for two portions of oily fish a week. Trout, salmon, mackerel and fresh tuna are rich in omega 3 fatty acids, which help to lower cholesterol levels and, in turn, your risk of high blood pressure.

STAY FIT AND SUN YOURSELF

Aerobic exercise is key in keeping your blood pressure in check because it boosts your heart function and helps you maintain a healthy weight.

'That doesn't mean you have to join the gym or run 10 miles, unless you want to of course!' says Professor Beevers.

'Anything that raises your heart rate, making you breathe harder and feel slightly warmer, rather than gasping for air, will be beneficial. This could include brisk walking, mowing the lawn, jogging, dancing, swimming or cycling. Simply build more incidental exercise into the day – use the stairs, for example – to naturally lower your blood pressure.'

Yoga fans can rejoice, too. Practising yoga two or three times a week results in a significant drop in blood pressure as it helps you relax, according to a study by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania.

In fact, there's a wealth of research to suggest tackling stress boosts heart health. Researchers at the University of Vienna found hugging a loved one, or even stroking your pet, releases oxytocin into the bloodstream, which helps lower blood pressure.

Lastly, get out in the late summer sun for around 20 minutes each day. Exposure to UVA rays also triggers the release of nitric oxide, according to scientists at Southampton University.

Eating well, staying active and making time for fun and laughter will help you keep healthy blood pressure for life.

● **In next month's future-proof your health, we tell you how to keep your joints strong and pain-free.**

BLOOD PRESSURE: THE FACTS

● **What is it?** Blood pressure is a measure of the force exerted by blood against the artery walls.

● **What are risk factors?** Age, poor diet, smoking, excess weight, no exercise and too much alcohol all increase blood pressure. Risk is also higher if you have a family history and/

or are of Afro-Caribbean or South Asian origin.

● **What are the dangers?** High blood pressure is responsible for 60 per cent of strokes and 40 per cent of heart attacks in the UK. It also causes kidney failure by putting the small blood vessels in the kidneys under strain.

● **How is it treated?**

Lifestyle changes should be enough to lower blood pressure. If doctors decide you need tablets, there are four main types: ACE inhibitors and angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) block the chemicals that narrows arteries; calcium channel blockers (CCBs)

stop calcium from narrowing vessels; and thiazide diuretics increase the amount of urine passed.

● **Blood Pressure UK's Know Your Numbers Week** takes place from 14-20 September. Have a free blood pressure check at a 'Pressure Station' near you. Visit bloodpressureuk.org.



Your inner key to

YOUTH

Maintaining a healthy hormone balance is vital for long-lasting youthfulness. Two women's health experts share their wisdom on staying younger for longer.

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU had a bit of an off day and blamed your hormones? These clever chemical messengers signal to cells and internal organs to maintain brain function, metabolism, mood, sexual health and your immune system. But keeping them balanced is the secret to feeling great at any age.

Many people assume declining hormone levels are just a part of getting older and nothing can be done, but this couldn't be further from the truth. You can feel fantastic at every stage of life by making simple dietary and lifestyle changes to regulate what are often referred to as the 'ageing hormones', such as cortisol, while boosting anti-ageing ones such as DHEA. 'There's no age limit on good hormone health,' says Dr Anna Cabeca an expert in women's health, specialising in bio-identical hormone replacement therapy and natural alternatives.

'It's normal for hormone production to decline with the passing of the years, but it shouldn't cause hormone imbalance,' she says. 'But because many of us are exposed to toxins and endocrine disruptors, such as chemicals in food and drink, packaging, cosmetics and pollution, this can affect our bodies' ability to produce and regulate hormones.'

Your endocrine system is a collection of glands, including the adrenals and ovaries, that produces hormones. Cosmetics, packaging and cleaning products can contain chemicals called endocrine disruptors that stop your glands secreting enough hormones. These chemical nasties include bisphenol A, found in plastic bottles and tinned food containers, hair dye and sunscreen, and phthalates in cosmetics, such as eye shadow, moisturiser, perfume, liquid soap or nail varnish.

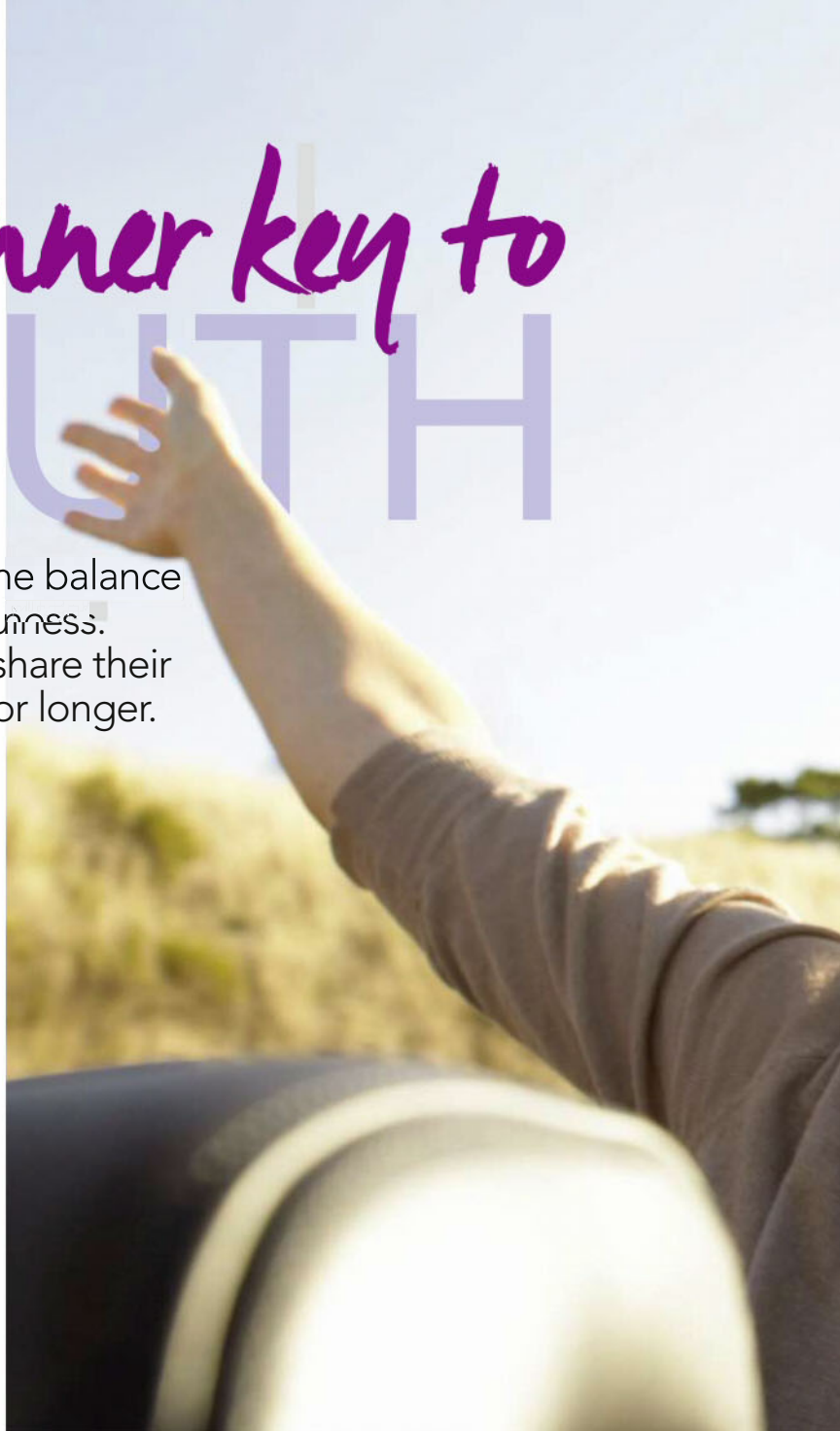
Endocrine disruptors enter your blood stream through your skin and mess with your hormones

**Tweaking
your diet
and taking
herbal
supplements
can bring
you back
into
balance.**

by interfering with normal function, causing imbalance. According to researchers*, they may also cause cancer, diabetes, obesity and infertility.

Natural products are better for hormone health as they contain fewer or no hormone disruptors. But, you can also use ingredients from your kitchen, such as organic coconut oil for moisturiser, make-up remover and conditioner, and baking soda as a deodorant and cleaning product. Pesticides found on food can also cause hormone disruption* so it's better to choose organic food for hormone health.

A study from Newcastle University* found pesticide residue was four times more likely to be found on conventional crops than on organic ones. You can find a list of potentially toxic products and foods at ewg.org.





SPOT SIGNS OF IMBALANCE

'Your hormones are like a finely balanced thermostat that is unique to you,' says Dr Marilyn Glenville, a woman's health specialist. 'If one becomes imbalanced it causes a cascade effect impacting all the others. Female hormones are especially susceptible to imbalance because they go through a rollercoaster of change from puberty to menopause.'

Hormones are chemical substances instructing your body to regulate vital processes, such as metabolism, sleep and menstruation. There are about 50 presently identified main hormones, which are secreted by various glands into the bloodstream to travel to the relevant cells.

Signs of hormone imbalance include constant fatigue, which can be caused by an underactive

thyroid gland that's not producing enough of the hormone thyroxine. This can be caused by autoimmune diseases where the body attacks its own immune system, a genetic tendency or lack of iodine (you need 0.14mg a day, which is easily obtainable from a diet containing iodine-rich foods such as fish, shellfish and dairy). Insomnia could signal that your melatonin hormone has gone haywire. Reasons for this include jetlag, over-exposure to light during night-time hours such as working night shifts, or excess intake of vitamin B12 (more than 3000mcg per day). If your adrenal glands are overworked, usually due to stress, your body can also store fat causing weight gain, especially around the belly. Persistent cystic acne could be a sign you're producing too much testosterone.

GLANDS MOST RELEVANT TO ANTI-AGEING

- **PITUITARY:** This is at the base of your brain behind the optical nerve and releases oxytocin for mood and human growth hormone (HGH).
- **PINEAL:** At the centre of the brain, it releases melatonin to regulate your sleep cycle.
- **OVARIES:** These secrete DHEA for a strong immune system, oestrogen for reproduction and progesterone for menstruation.
- **THYROID:** This butterfly-shaped gland in the neck releases thyroxine for metabolism.
- **ADRENALS:** Located just above each kidney, they release adrenaline and cortisol as a stress coping response.

YOUTH-BOOSTING HORMONES

To stay looking and feeling energised both inside and out, there are seven key anti-ageing hormones you may want to enhance either through dietary changes or supplements. But before you rush to buy any, it's important to find out which ones you actually need, so as not to create further imbalances. A qualified medical practitioner, nutritionist or herbalist will be able to help you, by giving you either a blood or saliva test. Blood tests are available free on the NHS, but you usually have to pay for saliva tests. Try the female hormone test, £215 from naturalhealthpractice.com.

● Melatonin

Called the sleep hormone, melatonin keeps your biological body clock ticking along nicely. You get better beauty sleep when this hormone is being released. A study* found melatonin is anti-ageing because it has antioxidant properties and protects your nervous system. Melatonin is released by the pineal gland during the night and stops releasing during the light of day. Bright light inhibits the production of melatonin so make sure you turn off the lights at bedtime and cover your windows with thick curtains or blinds. Use a low watt bulb at night (about 5 watts) and avoid the bright light of TVs, computers and mobile phone screens at night to minimise disruption.

● DHEA

Hailed as the ultimate youth elixir, DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone) is a steroid hormone produced by your adrenal glands, and also secreted by the ovaries. According to a study*, it boosts your immune system, improves mood, sharpens memory, reduces inflammation, strengthens bones and improves libido.

DHEA may become depleted if your adrenals are over-worked due to chronic low-level stress, sudden trauma or poor nutrition such as a diet that is high in sugar and refined carbs.

DHEA levels naturally start declining in your thirties, and you lose about two per cent per year. By menopause, you generally have less than 30 per cent of the DHEA you had in your twenties*. Some medical professionals suggest replacing the lost hormone with DHEA supplements.

'DHEA is a great anti-ager for menopausal women,' says Dr Cabeca. 'It protects breasts, bones and mental health. It's a precursor to testosterone and oestrogen, meaning that when DHEA is depleted your reproductive hormones are also negatively affected. I recommend taking 5-10mg of DHEA once a day for 4-6 weeks.' In the UK, DHEA is only available on prescription.



Choose organic, chemical-free cosmetics and toiletries to lessen your exposure to potential oestrogen disruptors.



● Oestrogen

This female sex hormone has three parts to it: estrone, estradiol and estriol. Produced in the ovaries, it's vital for regular menstruation, healthy pregnancy, strong bones and collagen production.

When in balance it also increases the feel-good hormone serotonin in your brain and protects nerves from damage. Excess oestrogen, often due to chemicals in cosmetics and household cleaning products can cause endometriosis* or cancer*. Low oestrogen levels are also caused by polycystic ovaries, eating disorders and extreme exercising. The latter two issues can mean your body is not receiving adequate nutrition, or your body fat is unhealthy low. Being too thin sends your body into starvation mode, shutting off oestrogen production (periods can stop altogether) and putting you at risk of osteoporosis and infertility.

Oestrogen levels naturally dip after menopause, causing hot flushes, vaginal dryness and loss of sex drive. Oestrogen hormone replacement therapy was the standard treatment to reduce menopause symptoms until a wide-ranging study* found HRT increased the risk of breast cancer, stroke and blood clots. Instead you can balance oestrogen with diet and herbal supplements (see next page).

● Progesterone

'Progesterone is a precursor to all hormones and helps balance them,' says Dr Cabeca. 'It supports brain function, memory, bone health and healthy breast tissue. Used on your face, especially around the eyes, progesterone cream is a potent anti-wrinkle treatment. It's essential to use bio-identical, not synthetic, progesterone because synthetic progesterone (progestin) has been linked to cancer but the bio-identical version has been found to be safe'. 'Another study' found progesterone keeps your memory sharp as you get older by signalling to brain cells to continue growing.

● Testosterone

Our ovaries produce small amounts to regulate libido, bone density, muscle mass, heart health, mood and wellbeing so it's important to have the right balance for optimum health. Too much, and you may find yourself with excess body hair, scalp hair loss, acne and polycystic ovary syndrome. Low testosterone spells low libido, weight gain and chronic fatigue. Balance it with correct nutrition as described over the page.

● Thyroxine

Produced by the thyroid gland, thyroxine controls your appetite, weight, metabolism, body temperature and energy levels. A balanced release of this hormone also maintains healthy skin, glossy hair and strong nails.

An underactive thyroid causes low thyroxine levels, which can result in weight gain, low energy and feeling cold all the time, plus dry, brittle hair and nails. But too much thyroxine in the bloodstream causes tiredness, unhealthy weight loss and an irregular menstrual cycle.

Balance thyroxine by staying hydrated – drinking approximately two litres of water per day – and cutting out sugary and fizzy drinks. Smoking also irritates your thyroid gland, which is a great reason to quit for good.

● Human growth hormone

Hyped in Hollywood as the fount of all youth for wrinkle-free skin and increased sex drive, human growth hormone does help maintain your metabolism and regulate glucose levels. But, it is not deemed safe for turning back the biological clock as it has not been adequately studied' and has been associated with joint pain, insulin resistance and carpal tunnel syndrome. GHG declines as you age but you can naturally trigger its production with daily aerobic exercise, such as 30 minutes swimming or cycling.

3 WAYS TO BALANCE YOUR HORMONES NATURALLY

A combination of correct nutrition, supplements, lifestyle changes and simply practising gratitude can all help normalise levels.

1 ANTI-AGE YOUR DIET

Compounds found in cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale and sprouts, help detoxify oestrogen by-products.

You could also include lots of foods that contain phytoestrogens, which are natural compounds found in some plants. These have an oestrogen-balancing effect, meaning that when levels are low, the phytoestrogens have a mild oestrogen-boosting effect, and when levels are too high, they block oestrogen uptake by your cells to lower levels. Food sources include oats, flax seeds (linseeds), beans and seaweed.

Another substance found to help balance hormones is omega-3 fatty acids. A study* found omega-3s could relieve hormonal symptoms of menopause and also guard against osteoporosis and breast cancer. 'Oysters are rich in DHA, which is a healthy omega-3, so add them to your diet to feel the benefits,' says Dr Cabeca. Krill oil is also a potent source of DHA so consider taking daily supplements – try Krill Oil 500mg; £29.99 for 40 capsules from hollandandbarrett.com. Or, add mackerel, sardines and anchovies to your diet. Other hormone-balancing foods include seaweed, Brazil nuts, avocados and salmon. Choose organic varieties where possible to avoid consuming toxins from pesticides.

Balance oestrogen

Eat moderate amounts of organic, unrefined phytoestrogens 2-3 times per week. Fermented soy products are the best sources. Asian women, who typically eat a soy-rich diet, don't tend to have menopausal symptoms*. Other foods rich in phytoestrogens:
 *Seaweed
 *Flax seeds
 *Sesame seeds
 *Oats
 *Lentils
 *Liquorice root
 *Apples
 *Carrots
 *Chickpeas
 *Mint
 *Ginseng



Herbal supplements to try

Some herbs have traditionally been used to balance hormones, and now scientific studies are proving they work.

1) Mighty Maca; £38 for 204g from mightymaca.com. Maca is a Peruvian root vegetable traditionally used to boost energy, improve mood and relieve PMS and menopause symptoms. This mixture also contains cinnamon, spirulina (an algae rich in omega-3) and flax seeds, which have high levels of omega-3, all good for balancing hormones.

2) Black Cohosh Nutrition Support; £24.77 for 60 capsules from naturalhealthpractice.com.

A study* found Black Cohosh preserves bone density in a similar way to oestrogen. This blend of five organic herbs includes black cohosh, along with red sage, milk thistle, agnus castus and dong quai. It's traditionally used to relieve hormonal imbalance due to menopause.

3) Tranquil Woman Plus; £22.97 for 90 capsules from naturalhealthpractice.com.

This stress reliever will help to keep your cortisol levels down. Cortisol is a steroid hormone, known as a glucocorticoid, made in the adrenal glands to help your body cope with stress. Too much cortisol can speed up ageing because it accelerates the decrease in telomere length, which are 'protective caps' on your DNA strands. When they shorten, the life span of the cell shortens too, causing, among other things, wrinkles, greying hair, poor eyesight and hearing deterioration. The capsules contain magnesium for relaxation and regulated sleep, chromium to balance blood sugar and other nutrients for hormone balance, digestion and immune support.

4) Vitex agnus-castus extract; £7.15 for 30 tablets from highernature.co.uk.

An extract of the fruit and leaves of this tropical flowering plant, also known as chasteberry, relieves hormonal symptoms of PMS, according to a study* by Hamedan University of Medical Sciences, Iran.

2 LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Regular exercise is important. 'A daily walk, yoga or dance class is effective for hormone health because moderate exercise relieves stress,' says Dr Glenville. 'But don't over-do it or your body will release extra cortisol to cope with the strain.'

3 COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Your mind can have a big impact on hormones, too. A study from the HeartMath Institute* found practising gratitude lowers stress levels, thereby having an anti-ageing effect. Cortisol and DHEA levels of 45 healthy participants were measured before and four weeks after being



Moderate exercise such as yoga helps relieve stress to keep you young.

Daily gratitude practice lowers the stress hormone cortisol to calm your nervous system.

trained in appreciation and gratitude techniques. On average, cortisol levels decreased by 23 per cent, while DHEA increased by 100 per cent in the experimental group! The control group – not practising gratitude techniques – saw no significant change in hormone levels.

Try this exercise by Dr Anna Cabecca each day to support your hormone health long-term.

1) Choose a notepad or journal you can use solely for this practice. Find a quiet, comfortable place at home where you will be undisturbed for at least five minutes.

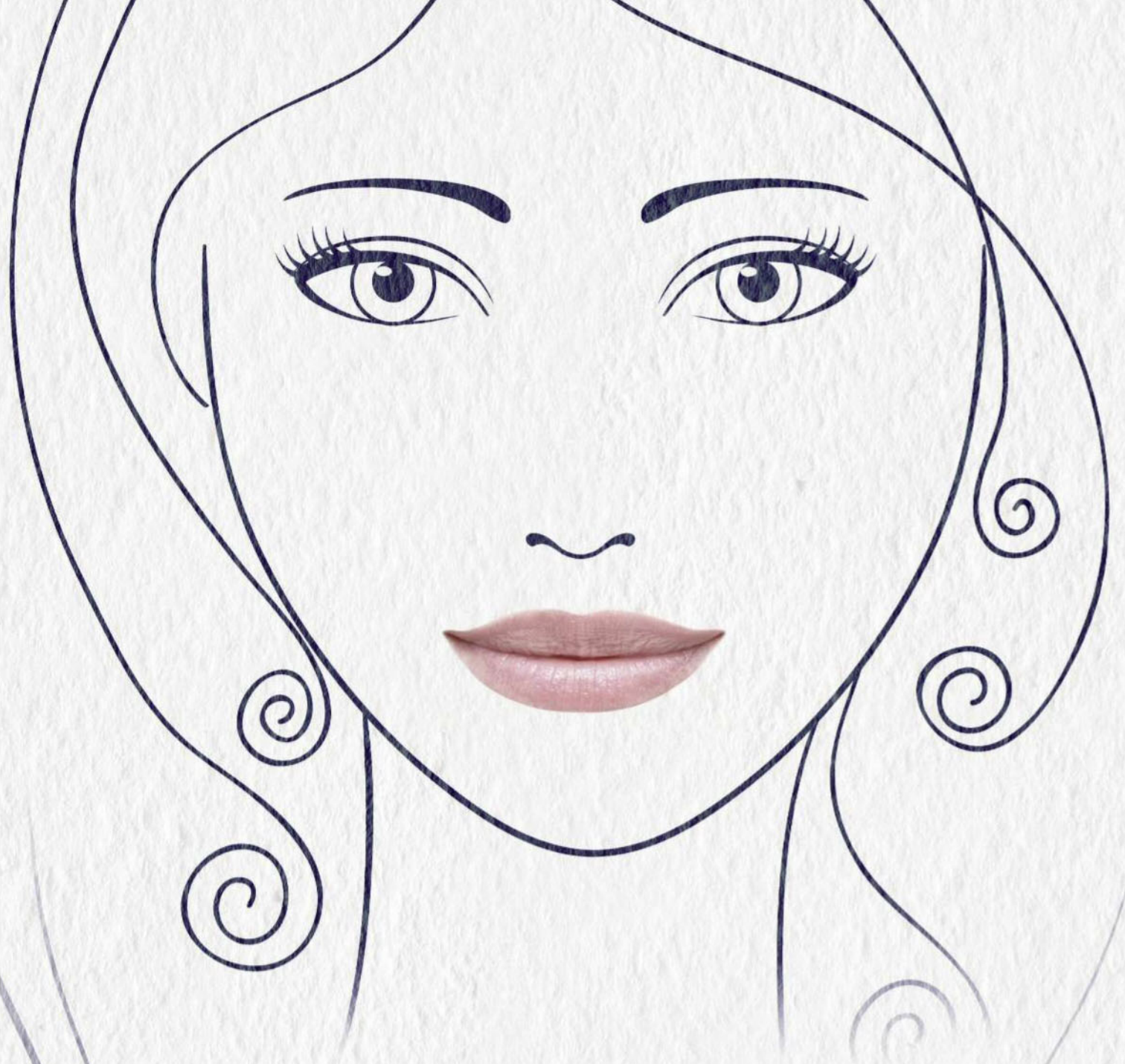
2) Think of all the good things you have in your life: your family, health, talents, home, friends, anything you love. Write a list of all the things you are grateful for and be very specific. Try to think of one new thing each day so the list gets longer.

3) On days when you are feeling down or annoyed with your nearest and dearest, focus on the bigger picture, for example, 'I am grateful I have clean water to drink' or 'I am grateful for my vision and hearing'.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Dr Anna Cabecca: cabeccahealth.com
Marilyn Glenville: marilynnglenville.com





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Your GENIUS gut

NEW
SERIES

Your intestinal health is crucial for your overall wellbeing. In part one of our new series on how to keep your gut healthy, we look at the role of microbes.

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF TALK about stomachs this year. Not the 'beach-ready' kind either – we're talking deeper than that.

There have already been several best-selling books published relating to gut health (see box, opposite), and a number of pioneering TV shows that have delved into the formerly taboo subject of tummy and toilet habits.

And it's all because of microbes and your microbiome, which is an ecological community of microorganisms in your gut – the health of which affects your entire body.

Microbes are tiny organisms that can be found in air, soil and water, but there are also trillions inside you. In fact, most of your microbes live in your intestines and account for around 90 per cent of the cells in your body.

More than 1,000 different bacterial species can be found in your microbiome. Recent ground-breaking studies have found that upsetting the balance can cause diseases, while restoring the balance can lead to optimum health.

While everyone's microbiome balance is unique, one of the better-known, problem-causing germs is *Helicobacter*

Studies have found that upsetting the balance of your gut bacteria causes diseases, while restoring the balance can lead to optimum health.

pylori. Generally it causes no harm and is found in around two thirds of people, but an overgrowth, usually due to being in unsanitary environments, can cause stomach inflammation, such as gastritis.

An example of one of the good guys is *Lactobacillus acidophilus*, which sets up a fortress on the wall of your small intestine to stop bad bacteria from entering your bloodstream.

A healthy gut must contain a rich diversity of bacteria. The more variety there is, the stronger it is against attack. At this year's Gut Microbiota for Health World Summit, Professor Colin Hill of the APC Microbiome Institute at University College Cork highlighted the crucial role that diet plays in promoting a healthy gut microbiome.

'The more diverse your diet is, the more diverse your microbiota is, and the better you'll be able to withstand challenges such as antibiotics, travelling or gut disease,' he said.

A recent experiment with germ-free mice showed a correlation between gut microbes, weight gain and weight-related illnesses. The mice put on weight when they were fed microbes from an obese person, but they didn't gain weight when fed microbes from a lean person. When they were given bacteria from mice with Type 2 diabetes, they too developed problems metabolising sugar.

This clearly proves that the gut microbiome is not a fixed entity. It's entirely susceptible to its environment, in other words what's put into it, and as such is constantly changing.

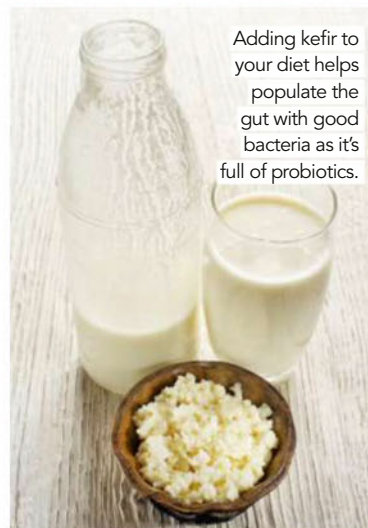
Poor diet, stress, bacterial infections and overuse of antibiotics have all been shown to upset normal gut microbial communities, resulting in an imbalance that has been linked to everything from IBS and inflammatory bowel disease to obesity and even cancer. Given our approach to diet and antibiotic use in the Western world, it's hardly surprising that these conditions are increasingly common. On the plus side, it means we also hold the power to rectifying imbalances and promote better health. As the experiments with the mice proved, diet alone can rapidly change your microbiome make-up within a very short period of time. This means that, unlike with your inherited genes, which are more or less fixed, you can exert a huge influence over your gut bacteria by making changes to your diet.

EAST COMES TO THE WEST

This new wisdom on gut health has been known to Eastern healthcare systems for centuries. Ayurveda – literally 'the science of life' – which originates from India, teaches that a weakened digestive system produces toxic build-up and is the root cause of all disease.

An Ayurvedic diet restores the body to full health with the use of antifungal and antibacterial spices such as turmeric (above), cinnamon and garlic, as well as fermented foods and insoluble fibres, which nourish the digestive system and feed good bacteria.

Adding kefir to your diet helps populate the gut with good bacteria as it's full of probiotics.



GUT-FRIENDLY FOOD

Probiotic foods should be on your gut-friendly menu. These contain live bacteria that promote a healthy gut and good digestion. They help with the production of beneficial bacteria, such as *Lactobacillus bifidus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*, and limit the bad bacteria that can cause infection and inflammation. You can add them to your diet in supplement form or by eating fermented foods

naturally rich in good probiotics, such as live yoghurt, apple cider vinegar, kefir – which is a sour milk drink or cream (see box, above) – and unpasteurised

pickled foods, such as sauerkraut and kimchee.

Certain foods also help promote the health and growth of probiotics. Known as prebiotics, these indigestible fibres feed the good bacteria in your gut and encourage them to multiply. They are naturally present in a range of fruit and vegetables as well as some grains, legumes and nuts. Artichokes, apples, bananas, polenta, bran and almonds are all good sources.

By adopting a balanced, nutritious diet rich in fibre and probiotics, you can keep your gut healthy and effectively reverse any damage you may have done to your microbiome through poor diet or overuse of antibiotics over the years.

The bottom line is: if you're good to your gut now, your health will thank you for it down the line.

Fibre feeds the good bacteria in your gut, helping it to thrive.

AMAZON'S TOP GUT BEST-SELLERS IN 2015

1 *Gut: The Inside Story of Our Body's Most Underrated Organ* by Giulia Enders (Scribe Publications) explains the basics of nutrient absorption and the latest science linking bowel bacteria with depression.


2 *Gut Gastronomy: Revolutionise Your Eating to Create Great Health* by Vicki Edgson and Adam Palmer (Jacqui Small) focuses on regaining good health by eating stomach-friendly foods.

3 *Brainmaker: The Power of Microbes to Heal and Protect Your Brain for Life* by Dr David Perlmutter (Yellow Kite) talks about nurturing gut health to alter brain destiny for the better.

4 *Good Gut: Taking Control of Your Weight, Your Mood, and Your Long Term Health* by Justin and Erica Sonnenburg (Bantam Press) looks at safe alternatives to antibiotics, and dietary and lifestyle choices.

5 *The Diet Myth: The Real Science Behind What We Eat* by Tim Spector (Orion) unravels the real science behind what we eat and how our bodies digest food.

● Next month: How stress influences your gut health and the link to IBS.



IF YOU'RE ONE OF THE 20 per cent of women who suffer from migraines, the condition of recurring headaches, you'll be all too familiar with the telltale signs.

Perhaps for you it's the tiredness that can descend before the migraine hits, the ultra-sensitivity to noise and light, the nausea and the headache itself, or the throbbing pain.

Scientists have been studying migraines for more than 100 years.

In 1868, British surgeon Edward Woakes recommended treating migraines with ergot, a derivative of fungus. But even now there is still much to learn about how they work.

Not all experts are in agreement about what happens during a migraine, but, according to The Migraine Trust, chemical changes in the brain stem cause an attack to begin. This ignites a loop of temporary changes in the chemicals and blood vessels in the brain, with the brain itself responding abnormally to the signals from its blood vessels.

Goodbye **MIGRAINES!**

New research and
making a few
lifestyle changes
could spell an end
to your headaches.

Attacks can be unpredictable, symptoms can vary, and there are several types. A migraine without aura affects 70-90 per cent of sufferers. The headache is usually on one side of the head with a throbbing or pulsating pain, you can feel sick and become sensitive to light or sound.

A migraine with aura – visual disturbances such as spots or wavy lines appearing in front of your eyes – used to be known as a ‘classic’ migraine. These are experienced by around 15 per cent of sufferers.

‘Migraines are known to affect 20 per cent of women,’ says Dr Fayyez Ahmed, consultant neurologist and spokesperson for The Migraine Trust. ‘However, we also know that the condition is vastly under-diagnosed.’

Intriguingly, the latest thinking is that it’s possible to be a ‘migraineur’ even if you don’t have the classic symptoms listed above.

For one thing, these headaches aren’t necessarily always as severe as most people imagine, which is one of the reasons why they’re under-diagnosed. ‘There’s a school of thought that what are known as tension headaches are in fact mild migraines,’ explains Dr Ahmed.

If you are a sufferer, you can blame it on your genes. ‘Several genes are involved, rather than a single one, although we don’t fully understand how they’re connected,’ says Dr Ahmed.

‘Those with the genes that cause susceptibility have a lower threshold of sensitivity to triggers compared with

other people. There are lots of potential triggers, including stress, hormones, skipping meals, lack of sleep, some foods including cheese, chocolate and red wine and even the weather.

‘If you have a susceptibility to migraine and several of these triggers are acting at the same time, you’re likely to have an episode.’

LEARN THE HORMONE CONNECTION

Most women who have migraines experience their first attack during their teens, many around the time of their first period. ‘Up until puberty, boys and girls are equally affected by migraines, but afterwards it becomes twice as common in women,’ says Dr Ahmed.

Half of women who get them say they notice a link with their menstrual cycle. Attacks are most common before the age of 40, and studies suggest this could be because they are triggered by a drop in oestrogen, which occurs just before a period. ‘Severe PMS symptoms, which



Migraine Awareness Week

runs from 6-12 September – see migrainetrust.org.

can include feeling detached, sensitive to noise and experiencing neck ache, could themselves be the initial phase of migraine,’ says

Dr Nicholas Silver, consultant neurologist at The Walton Centre NHS Foundation

Trust in Liverpool. ‘This phase may or may not lead into an actual headache.’

For most women who have migraines that are connected to PMS, symptoms ease once bleeding starts.

While menstruation can be a trigger, some women – fewer than 10 per cent, according to The Migraine Trust – have a specific type, called menstrual migraine. These are most likely to occur in the two days leading up to menstruation or the first three days of a period, and at no other time. There are two causes: the sudden drop of oestrogen as part of the menstrual cycle, which means the body has to deal with the hormone withdrawal; plus, the normal release of an inflammatory substance called prostaglandin, which occurs within the first two days of your period. This sort of migraine lasts longer than other types, does not come with aura, and tends to be particularly severe.

To work out whether hormones play a role in your migraines, it can be helpful to keep a diary for at least three months, noting your symptoms and the days you have your period. If your symptoms tend to strike when your period starts, you should speak to your doctor about the possibility of

THE FOUR STAGES OF MIGRAINE

According to The Migraine Trust, most migraine sufferers will experience more than one of these phases, but not everyone has aura. You can get aura without the headache too. Each phase can vary in length and severity, and the phases and symptoms are what distinguishes a migraine from a headache.

PREMONITORY STAGE: Physical and mental changes, such as tiredness, craving sweet foods, mood changes, feeling thirsty and a stiff neck. This can last from 1-24 hours.

AURA STAGE: During this stage you’ll experience visual disturbances, such as flashing lights or sensory symptoms, including pins and needles. This may last from 5-60 minutes.

MAIN ATTACK STAGE: This consists of head pain, which is typically throbbing and one-sided, and can last 4-72 hours.

RESOLUTION AND RECOVERY STAGE (POSTDROME STAGE): Most migraines fade slowly, though some are resolved suddenly by vomiting.

menstrual migraine. 'We can treat these types of migraine with oestrogen supplements, usually in the form of gels or patches, to prevent the decline in oestrogen being so dramatic that it causes an attack,' says Dr Ahmed.

If symptoms are more likely in the second half of your cycle, but tend to improve once your period starts, you may have migraines related to PMS. However, says Dr Ahmed, that doesn't necessarily mean you'll have them every month. 'As they usually result from more than one trigger, avoiding other triggers may help prevent them.'

If your migraines are hormone-related, here's the great news: after menopause, they're very likely to ease. 'Oestrogen levels are consistently lower after menopause, and, for most women, the loss of a fluctuating level in the blood means they typically suffer from fewer attacks,' says Dr Silver.

'During the perimenopause, migraines may get temporarily worse due to hormone fluctuations. In fact, worsening attacks can be the first symptom of perimenopause, often occurring a few years before women notice other symptoms,' says Dr Silver. However, once you're out the other side of menopause, you can expect them to be a lot less frequent.

Manage your migraines

If you're a regular sufferer you're probably used to having painkillers on hand, whether that's paracetamol and ibuprofen, or drugs such as triptans, a group of medicines that were specially designed for migraines. But use painkillers too often and you may experience rebound headaches, where withdrawing from the pills each time you take them can in itself trigger headaches. It's better to prevent migraines in the first place.

'Around 40 per cent of people are helped significantly just through changing their lifestyle,' says Dr Silver. 'For the others, change in lifestyle will typically help other treatments to be effective in preventing attacks.'

HAVE A REGULAR SCHEDULE

It's thought that migraines may be connected to the circadian rhythms, or your body clock. If this finely tuned system is knocked out of whack, for example, by going to bed too late, by having too much sleep or jet lag, it may react by triggering a migraine. So try to go to bed and get up at regular times. 'Eating regularly is also important as skipping meals can trigger an attack, although we don't really know why,' says Dr Silver. Finally, drink plenty of fluids

as dehydration may be a trigger. A study from the University of Maastricht, Netherlands, found that when women drank 1.5 litres of water daily, they experienced less frequent and less intense headaches.



Quit caffeinated drinks and keep decaf to a minimum.

DO THE MIGRAINE DETOX

'I recommend you quit both painkillers and caffeine,' says Dr Silver. 'Caffeine has pain-relieving properties, which is the reason it's added to many over-the-counter painkillers that are followed by words such as "extra", "ultra" and "plus". But while caffeine works for a short while, once it begins to wear off it can trigger rebound headaches, as can painkillers.

Remove all sources, including tea, coffee, green tea and chocolate. Be aware that decaf drinks still contain small amounts of caffeine so you shouldn't drink too many, and those sold

in high street coffee outlets may sometimes contain more than small amounts.

Yes, you may feel worse to start with as you withdraw from caffeine and tablets, but this is actually a good sign as it shows they were probably contributing to your migraines, and therefore you're likely to notice improvements in the long-term.

'After a week, symptoms will typically clear and you'll start to feel the benefits.

'You can allow yourself over-the-counter painkillers five to 10 times a year, if you really need them,' says Dr Silver.



TOP UP ON NUTRIENTS

'There are two key supplements that have been shown to help with migraine,' says Dr Silver. 'Riboflavin (vitamin B2) at 400mg daily can help, although it's not known how this works. And 500mg magnesium, going up to 1000mg if it's well-tolerated, can also be helpful. You need to give it six months to work.'

The theory is that people who have migraines have a magnesium deficiency, and this has a role in how an attack develops. It's been indicated as useful for those whose migraines are triggered by their period, or who experience aura. Because there are different types of magnesium and different formulations, it's worth speaking to your GP before taking it.

Riboflavin is used to prevent migraines because research suggest the brain cells of some sufferers may have a mitochondrial dysfunction, resulting in impaired oxygen metabolism. Riboflavin supplements are thought to improve the way oxygen is metabolised in the brain.

CONSIDER PREVENTATIVE TREATMENTS

If you don't benefit from detoxing from painkillers and caffeine and making the other lifestyle changes, Dr Silver advises speaking to your doctor about the following:


1 Regular medication. A number of preventative drugs that are commonly used to treat other conditions can stop migraine attacks, such as beta blockers, anticonvulsants, antidepressants, and anti-inflammatories. Prevention medication is often used for between three and 18 months and usually results in a big reduction in the number of headaches, thereby stopping the cycle of attacks.

2 Drug-free devices. Stimulation of the vagal nerve, which runs from your brain to your abdomen, has been found to help switch off migraine. This can be done via a device that's implanted near the base of the skull, though it has limited availability on the NHS. Or it can be carried out via

non-invasive devices, such as the Cefaly headband (£253, [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)). An electrode is stuck on to your forehead and connects with the headband – which generates micro-impulses to stimulate the trigeminal nerve, responsible for transmitting sensations from the face to the brain – to produce a relaxing effect. Used for 20 minutes every day, it's said to prevent an attack or reduce severity at the start.

3 Cranial Botox. Dr Ahmed pioneered the use of this in people with chronic migraine who haven't responded to other treatments. And, in the future, says Dr Silver, we'll see immune-based therapies that target the chemicals involved in these headaches.

Meanwhile, research and studies continue. See migrainetrust.org for more details and about how you could volunteer to assist in research. 🧠



SPARKLING WHITE teeth have long been a hallmark of beauty and health. Keeping them brushed is one of the first things we learn to do as children. But how much attention do we give to our gums? It's your gums that anchor your teeth in place, but more than that, their health has an effect on your entire body. Healthy gums are pink in colour and should be firm to the touch. They shouldn't bleed when you brush or floss. If they do, and they have a red, shiny look, this could be a sign of gum disease.

Gum disease is caused by a build-up of plaque, a sticky substance containing bacteria that forms whenever you eat and drink. If plaque isn't removed by brushing your teeth it will build up and irritate your gums, leading to redness, swelling and soreness.

A healthy gum routine will help you avoid gum disease, which currently affects more than half of all adults in the UK. If left unchecked, it can seriously damage your health. Did you know, for example, that people with gum disease are almost twice as likely to have heart disease than people without?

Keep **SMILING**

Ensure strong, pearly white teeth
with our healthy gum guide.

'It is thought that bacteria from the mouth can get into your bloodstream and produce protein,' says Dr Ayee-Marie McGrath, gum specialist at Knightsbridge Dental Care.

'Most of the time these bacteria, known as streptococcus, are confined to the mouth, but when someone has bleeding gums they can get into the blood. This can make clots more likely to form, which can reduce normal blood flow and lead to a heart attack.'

So what can cause gum problems? If you're run down or stressed it's more common, as your immune system struggles to fight bacteria.

'Research shows that stress can make it more difficult for your body to fight off infection, including periodontal diseases,' says Dr McGrath.

'Some drugs can lead to gum problems too because they cause a dry mouth, and saliva production is vital in protecting your mouth tissues. Medications with mouth-drying side effects include some antihistamines, such as Benadryl, SSRI anti-depressants, including citalopram, as well as certain heart medicines, too.

'Clenching or grinding your teeth can also be a factor. It puts excess force on the supporting tissues of the teeth, which speeds up the rate at which periodontal (gum) tissue is affected by bacteria.

'If you have gum disease, your gums may bleed when you brush your teeth and you may have bad breath. If gingivitis is not treated with good oral hygiene, a condition called periodontitis can develop. This affects the tissues that support teeth, shrinking gums back and causing your teeth to wobble.'

Thankfully, most cases of gum disease can initially be treated with good oral hygiene. So continue to brush your teeth at least twice a day, floss daily and attend regular dental check-ups to ensure your mouth stays healthy.

DEVELOP GOOD GUM HABITS

Brushing thoroughly and correctly to remove bacteria is vital for teeth and gums, or gingiva, because it removes plaque and bits of food from the inner, outer and biting surfaces of your teeth.

'Always brush thoroughly with a fluoride toothpaste, as fluoride helps remove plaque, a film of bacteria that forms on teeth and

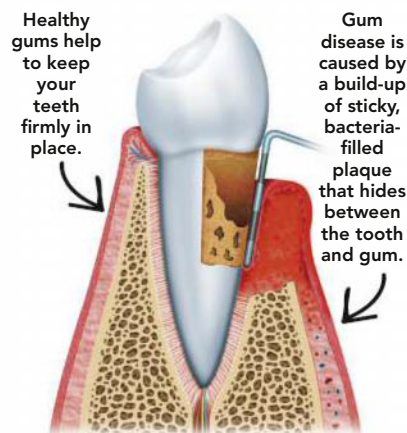
gums contributing to gum disease,' says Dr McGrath.

'Brush last thing at night and at least one other time during the day. The night-time brush is the most important because when you fall asleep, saliva, your natural buffer to help protect your mouth from the things you eat and drink, stops flowing.

'If all food and plaque isn't removed with adequate brushing, bacteria will colonise and cause your gums to become inflamed.'

It's important to change your toothbrush every two to three months, because worn bristles are less effective at removing plaque. Tests have shown that power toothbrushes are more effective at removing plaque. Those with heads that rotate in both directions, known as oscillating heads, are the most effective as they reach more contours around your gums.

TEETH: THE INSIDE STORY



It's vital to keep your gums healthy with regular brushing and flossing to prevent the spread of plaque, which introduces bacteria into your mouth.

Stop the snacking

Eating throughout the day instead of sticking to regular meal times can increase the risk of dental decay. Dr Djalil Shabahang of the Country Park Dental Practice in Essex explains it's better for your teeth if you eat three meals a day instead of snacking. 'If you do need to snack between meals, choose foods that don't contain sugar,' he suggests.

Oral bacteria release an acid when you snack on sugary food, and after eating it can take several hours for the pH level of your mouth to go back to normal. If you're constantly snacking, your mouth never has a chance to recover, making you more susceptible to tooth decay.

Some foods such as tinned or dried fruit are worse for your teeth

than others as they have a low pH, meaning they're highly acidic.

Try alkaline foods instead, such as green vegetables, peas, beans, lentils, seeds and nuts. However, don't avoid acidic food all together. Some acidic food contains vitamin C, which helps your immune system fight bacteria. Just remember that if you eat something acidic, you should eat something alkaline afterwards. For example, something high in acidity, such as chocolate, should be followed by a cup of green tea or a piece of cheese to neutralise the acid.

'Gum makes your mouth produce more saliva, which helps cancel out the acid after eating or drinking,' explains Dr Shabahang.

'Chewing gum containing the artificial sweetener xylitol may also help to reduce decay.' Chewing sugar-free gum for 20 minutes after meals

and snacks has been proven to help protect your teeth by neutralising plaque acid.



Try the Philips Sonicare EasyClean Electric Rechargeable Toothbrush (£44.99, boots.com). It's the number one recommended sonic toothbrush brand by dental professionals.

Flossing is another vital part of your oral care routine. 'Clean in between your teeth with floss, dental tape or an interdental brush,' says Dr McGrath. 'This removes plaque and bits of food from areas a toothbrush can't reach.'

Floss before brushing at least once a day and preferably after a meal.

Try the Oral-B Glide Pro-Health Clinical Protection Floss Picks (£5.39 for 30, chemistdirect.co.uk) or Corsodyl Daily Expanding Floss (£2.49 for 30m, lloydspharmacy.com). This contains compressed fibres to reach the space in between teeth, then expands slightly to pull out debris. Or UltraDex Interdental Tape (£3.50 for 25m, ultradex.co.uk), which is thinner and contains an anti-bacterial agent.

A mouthwash can help prevent plaque from building, especially one that contains fluoride, but won't actually remove it. Try an antiseptic mouthwash if you have mild gum disease, such as Corsodyl (£3.89 for 300ml, chemistdirect.co.uk).

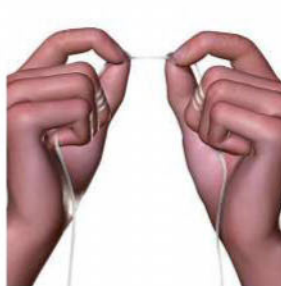


Deep clean

Floss effectively using Dr McGrath's four-step method.



1 Break off approximately 45cm (18in) of floss or tape, and wind most of it around one of your middle fingers. Wind the remaining floss around the same finger of the other hand. As you use it and it becomes worn, transfer the floss from one finger to the other, like on a cassette tape.



2 Hold the floss tightly between your thumbs and forefingers, with about an inch of floss between them, leaving no slack. Use a gentle 'rocking' motion to guide the floss between each of your teeth. Be careful not to jerk the floss or snap it into your gums.



3 Once the floss reaches your gum-line, gently curve it into a C-shape against one tooth until you feel some resistance.

TIP: If you find dental floss too thick, try dental tape, which is much thinner and is easier to get between your teeth.



4 Hold the floss against the tooth and gently move it up and down approximately eight times, making sure it goes into the gum line. Repeat on the other side of the gap, along the side of the neighbouring tooth. Don't forget the back of your last tooth. 🦷

Now finish what your toothbrush started



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*Source: A survey of dental hygienists in the UK, Eaton et al. (2012)

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FACTFILE

Eczema uncovered

Soothe this sore skin condition with help from our experts.

An inflammatory condition, eczema is the term used to describe changes on the surface layer of your skin, including redness and blistering. 'The main types are atopic eczema, which is caused by an overactive immune system, allergy-related eczema, and irritant eczema, which happens when your skin becomes irritated by something such as soap after excessive hand washing,' explains British Skin Foundation spokesperson Dr Anjali Mahto.

Eczema is thought to be due to problems with the immune system – specifically a type of white cell in the blood known as a T-cell – as well as environmental factors.

'It affects men and women and usually develops just weeks after you're born. Some people will grow out of it in their teenage years, while others will continue to have flare-ups throughout life.

'It's likely that if you've suffered atopic eczema in childhood, you'll be prone to irritant eczema as an adult.

'The main symptom is itchy skin and scratching that causes redness and sores. Many people who suffer from eczema have naturally higher levels of the bacteria *Staphylococcus* on their skin, which, when you scratch, can enter your body through a cut and cause infection.

BE TRIGGER SAVVY

'The surface of your skin contains a protective layer of lipids – a group of molecules that include fats, waxes and fat-soluble vitamins,' says Dr Mahto. 'Changes in temperature can disrupt this layer, leaving it prone to eczema.

'Stress can also trigger eczema as it raises your cortisol levels, which in turn lowers your levels of infection-fighting white blood cells. Scientific data suggests that a poor diet lacking in vitamin D is also linked to the condition. Vitamin D, found in foods such as eggs and salmon,



as well as from the sun's rays, plays a role in reducing inflammation and promoting a strong, healthy skin barrier.

'Other potential triggers are highly perfumed products, such as soaps. Opt for a soap substitute instead, known as an emollient, which will keep your skin moisturised and hydrated. Brands such as Oilatum, Balneum and Dermol 500 are ideal and available in most pharmacies. If this isn't enough, prescription steroid creams are effective at giving instant relief from inflammation and soreness.'

GO HOLISTIC

A doctor of Chinese medicine, Dr Al-Khafaji, takes a holistic approach to eczema treatment. 'Steroid creams are a good temporary solution to an eczema flare up, but in Chinese medicine we try to find a more long-term solution,' he says.

In Chinese medicine rocket is thought to reduce internal inflammation.



'We believe atopic eczema in particular needs treatment from the inside, as well as the outside.'

Latest findings suggest a strong link between eczema and gut bacteria.

Beneficial bacteria and yeast communicate with your immune system, and the right levels can have a profound effect on your skin. Beneficial microbes vital for healthy skin are found in what Chinese medicine refers to as 'bitter' foods, such as rocket, which reduce inflammation, while hemp seeds, black and white sesame seeds and linseed are also good for keeping your skin moistened. Find out more about gut microbes on page 53.

PILE ON THE OIL

Your skin needs omega fatty acids to remain healthy and moisturised. Atopic eczema sufferers typically don't absorb these acids well from the gut, so applying them topically is a good option. Evening primrose oil is packed with all the omegas and acids your skin needs. Generously apply pure evening primrose oil directly onto your skin for a much-needed omega boost.

RAISING AWARENESS

It's National Eczema Week from 12-20 September. Find out more at eczema.org.

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Katy x Editor



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YOUR VIEWS

SET THE PACE

Over the past few years I have increased the amount of exercise I do. As a result I've noticed that I've become more toned and have more energy. However, I still haven't been able to tackle running. I get 100 yards down the road and need to stop. I love the idea of it, as I enjoy the fresh air, it's free and is a great fat-burner, but I just can't do it. That was until I read your article *How To Run Your First 10k* (July). I was

especially interested in the section on pacing that talks about the importance of not starting too quickly. I now realise this was exactly what I was doing, putting pressure on myself to go as fast as I could, but surprise, surprise I couldn't maintain it. I've now set a more realistic training

plan and I'm building speed and distance gradually. I may not be at 10K yet, but I'm getting there and I'm enjoying it!

Laura Barratt, Leicester

Congratulations Laura you've won a Nutribullet nutrition extractor, worth £99. It makes delicious, nutritious smoothies, to help boost your energy further and help you continue your running.

STAR LETTER



YOU SHARED YOUR SUMMER EXERCISE CHALLENGES AND HOW YOU TRAIN FOR THEM



I've been going running three times a week and doing parkrun on Saturdays to prepare for the Robin Hood Half Marathon and the Cleethorpes Colour Run.

Caroline Merriman

This year I'm taking part in the Bournemouth Pier to Pier Swim and I've been swimming twice a week since last August to prepare.

Claire Sandys Sandifer

I took part in Race For Life and Relay For Life this summer and trained by going to the gym and walking every day. **Libby Horsman**

CARING FOR KIDNEYS

Be Kind To Your Kidneys (July issue) really hit home for me, especially after I developed kidney stones six months ago – an experience I never want to repeat. If I had to choose between having kidney stones again or going through labour, I would choose labour, as at least there is a break between contractions! I'll be taking all your good advice on board to protect me in the future, including drinking at least eight glasses of water a day, eating more vegetables and keeping alcohol to a minimum.

Keeley Atkins, Wirral



HAPPY FEET

I wish I could have a weekly pedicure, but there just aren't enough hours in the day. When reading *Happy Feet* (July issue), I realised that my feet don't get the care they deserve. I may paint my toenails to make them look pretty, but I neglect them in so many other ways. I've now started a weekly pamper session and if my feet could smile, I think they would!

Sienna Robbins, North Wales

CLEANER TEETH WITH COCONUT OIL

I have been rinsing my mouth with coconut oil (as recommended in the July issue of *Top Santé*) for about nine months now and my dentist has declared everything perfect. Before this, I had a filling for the first time in my life. Surprised, I did

some research into natural health and discovered that oil pulling (swishing oil around the mouth) could help heal holes in teeth by pulling away bad bacteria and broken down food debris from the mouth, teeth and gums.

The taste of the oil was slightly off-putting but I got used to it and I noticed a cleaner feel and taste in my mouth. I now rinse with coconut oil at the end of the day after flossing, but before brushing my teeth.

Amelia, email

NEXT MONTH'S STAR PRIZE

Let us know how you stay fit and healthy. We'd love to hear from you!

Email talkback@topsante.co.uk Facebook

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The winner of next issue's star letter wins an Ultimate Sports Nutrition protein prize package that includes

Diet Fuel Ultralean, Protein Mousse, Collagen + CLA and USN Steel Shaker.





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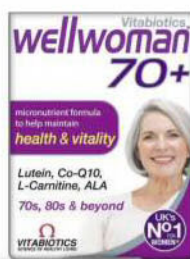
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Drink

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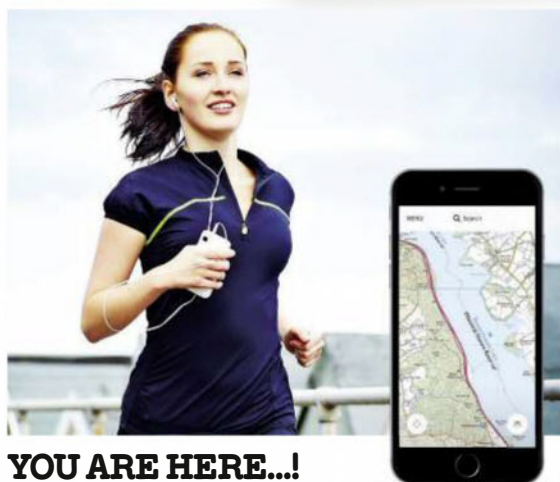
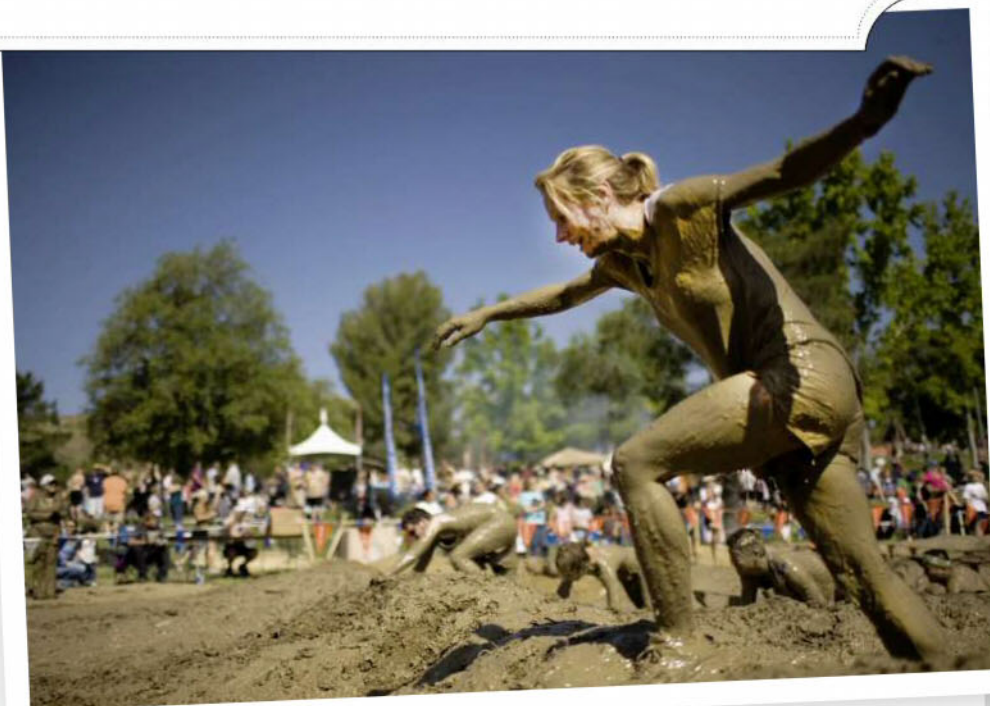
VITABIOTICS
SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING

FITNESS

Gadgets, home workouts and challenges to get you fitter this month.

Get dirty for cash!

Fancy getting muddy for a great cause? The Devil Mud Run takes place on 26 and 27 September near Cheltenham, raising money for Winston's Wish, which supports bereaved children. This 8K course includes natural and man-made obstacles, such as Satan's Steps, Swamp Thing and the Ice Dip. Places cost £45. Visit devilmudrun.com



YOU ARE HERE...!

You can now plot and store walking or running routes electronically thanks to a free ordnance survey map download. All map data is available, even in those remote 'no signal' areas to

ensure you don't get lost on your next activity. Maps are available from ordnancesurvey.co.uk or from outdoor and book shops UK wide, with prices starting from just £4.99.

RIDE IN STYLE

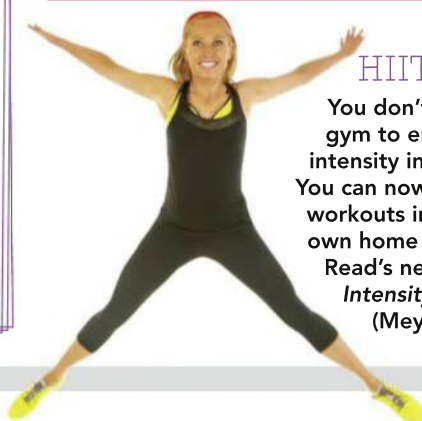
Whether you have a classic vintage or rugged mountain bike, make it look pretty with the Sass & Belle Scandi Birds Bike Seat Cover (£5, sassandbelle.co.uk). It's elasticated to fit all size seats and has an oil-cloth finish to protect your seat and keep it dry.

There's no need to worry about getting it muddy, as it's easy to wipe clean.



HIIT AT HOME

You don't need to go to the gym to enjoy a burst of high intensity interval training (HIIT). You can now follow 16 specialised workouts in the comfort of your own home with Lucy Wyndham-Read's new book *HIIT – High Intensity Interval Training* (Meyer and Meyer).







Youth-boosting WORKOUTS

It doesn't matter whether you're in your 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s or beyond – you can always get fit, and reap the youth-boosting benefits of exercise.

NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR fitness. Whether you are juggling your career and family, or enjoying having more time on your hands, you'll reap huge benefits from focusing on your own wellbeing. After all, by incorporating various types of exercise into your life, you can lose weight, build muscle, improve bone density and skin tone, and rebalance your hormones and energy, all of which will help slow down the ageing process and create a fitter, more energetic you.

'By exercising, you can trick your body into behaving younger,' says Tracey McAlpine, founder of an online health, beauty and fitness website for women over 50. 'There's an exciting correlation between exercising and slowing the ageing process at a cellular level. When we exercise, our brains naturally release Human Growth Hormone (HGH). This substance normally decreases with age, but by exercising we can stimulate the

production of it, helping us to look and feel younger. Aerobic exercise has also recently been shown to lengthen the life of telomeres, which are the end 'caps' to your DNA. When they shorten, your cells age faster. By lengthening them and keeping cells healthy, the better they perform.'

According to a 2009 study conducted at the University of California and published in the journals *Metabolism* and *Applied Physiology*, post-menopausal women of a stable weight are capable of many of the same endurance training-induced exercises as younger women.

The physical and hormonal changes that came with age did not slow down the ability of these women, who had an average age of 55, to get fit. One hour a day of exercise for 12 weeks led to them being deemed to have acquired the cardiovascular and metabolic capabilities of women 16 years younger.

Another study, quoted in *Harvard Health* found that while you can't stop the clock, you can slow its tick. The key, the study concluded, is regular activity – building up to 3-4 times per week. Tracey agrees: 'You need to be working out for at least 30 minutes 3-5 times a week and the more muscles you activate at the same time, the more you'll be able fire up your youth enhancing hormones.'

Exercise can also be the ultimate skin cleansing routine, nourishing the cells and helping to remove waste products. 'Exercise increases the blood flow to peripheral surface and collagen levels to keep muscles and the texture of the skin intact,' says Dr Mahalingam Lakshmanan, an integrative medicine practitioner. 'Moderate exercise on a regular basis also has an anti-inflammatory effect on the body, which is anti-ageing. Chronic inflammation such as pain in the joints is associated with ageing,' says Dr Lakshmanan.

Those extra steps you take, the extra five minutes playing tennis or the Pilates class you almost didn't go to, all add up to big changes in the long run. It's just a question of choosing the right types of exercise, sticking at them and having realistic expectations. Besides, exercise isn't only about changing what's on the outside, but just as much, if not more, about creating shifts in your inner world – improving mood and self-esteem. And if you accompany that increase in activity with a healthy diet and plenty of sleep, you're even more likely to reap the full health benefits and further slow the ageing process.

8 ANTI-AGEING WAYS TO MOVE YOUR BODY



1 RUN FOR HEART HEALTH

'There's evidence that running is the perfect high-impact exercise whatever your age,' says Tracey. 'Health benefits of running only increase because it can improve muscle strength and bone density, coordination and a sense of wellbeing. Contrary to popular belief, it's been proved that running doesn't cause arthritis and may in fact help to prevent it by increasing the fluid in the knee joints.' But before you grab your trainers and hurtle off, consider taking it slow, with a potter around the park. The Copenhagen City Heart Study, published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, concluded that light and moderate jogging is more beneficial than strenuous jogging in the long-term.

2 PERK UP WITH WEIGHTS

Picking up a dumbbell can help reduce muscle loss and metabolic sluggishness that occurs naturally. Building or maintaining muscle eats through more calories than fat, so while your metabolism does slow down as you age, having more muscle helps to combat any spread that might seem





imminent. Lunges are brilliant for building your quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes and calf muscles. Holding weights, stand up straight and take a big step forward. Imagine your feet are on train tracks rather than a tightrope. Bend your back knee until it brushes the floor then return back to starting position. Repeat 10 times on each side, building up to 2-3 sets.

Another great anti-ageing resistance exercise is chest presses. These build muscle around your breasts, which can help support them and keep them looking perky. Lie on a bench on your back, holding a dumbbell in each hand, with elbows bent so the weights are by your shoulders. Push the dumbbells up until they meet at the top, then bring them down again.

3 DANCE FOR BONE HEALTH – AND BIG SMILES!

Like all aerobic exercise, dance helps strengthen your heart and bones plus reduces blood pressure. It's also a really enjoyable way of doing some bodyweight resistance training, which strengthens and defines muscles. The repetitive movements, such as jumping or stamping your feet, force the muscle fibres in your legs to break down, and then, as you recover, adapt and come back stronger. Because it's such a fun and sociable form of exercise, it's likely to reduce stress too. A recent survey conducted by the Exercise, Move, Dance (EMD) campaign showed that 95 per cent of dancers agreed it helped them relax. Zumba, Clubbercise and SOSA Dance Fitness, a fusion of Latin, Ballroom and Salsa dancing, are all good ways of getting involved via group classes.



4 WALK FOR STRESS REDUCTION

All sensible cardiovascular exercise enhances immune function and improves heart health. But our bodies react to intense exercise much like any other stressor. So, on days when you're feeling uptight, it might actually be better to go for a walk or do a yoga class than adding to your stress by engaging in a high-intensity run or cycle. 'Unlike fast-running, walking doesn't create huge amounts of the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol,' says nutritionist and Fitter Foods co-founder Keris Marsden. 'A 90-minute walk can boost your levels of good mood chemical serotonin by 100 per cent.'



5 SWIM FOR WEIGHT LOSS

While swimming can feel like a gentle pursuit, research from the University of Western Australia suggests that it is even better for fitness and weight control for women aged 50-70 than walking, cycling or jogging. Researchers evaluated 120 women and found that compared with walking, swimming improved body weight, body fat distribution, and insulin in the short-term, and body weight and lipid measures in the longer-term. Swimming is also by its very nature a non-impact exercise, which makes it easier for people of all shapes and sizes to exert themselves regularly with far lower risk of injury, which over the long-term can result in greater weight loss.

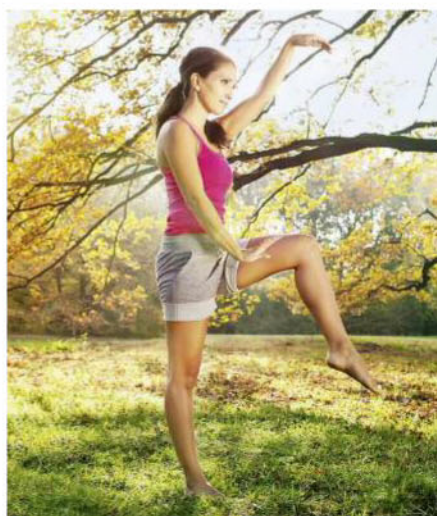
6 PRACTICE YOGA FOR FLEXIBILITY

Pictures of advanced yogis with their legs behind their heads can be intimidating but in reality, yoga is one of the most ageless forms of exercise you can do to keep your body supple and energetic.

A study published in the *Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine* concluded that yoga's stress-busting moves help reduce inflammation in the body, while moving through a range of yoga poses will increase blood flow and oxygen to your muscles. Over time, this will ease those nagging sore spots of stiffness that have accumulated over the years. More specifically, all yoga classes include postures to open up your hips, such as pigeon pose, middle back and hamstrings, such as downwards dog, and spinal twists to flush out toxins from your abdominal organs.

7 DO HIGH-INTENSITY FOR MUSCLE GROWTH

Exercise science shows that, provided you're not overly stressed, keeping the intensity high during your workout will be to your advantage. 'Adults who participate in high-intensity resistance training and cardiorespiratory exercise can increase their strength and lean muscle mass, helping them to maintain youthful levels of energy,' says the American Council on Exercise. High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) is where you alternate between anaerobic (not using oxygen) periods and slower recovery periods. 'It helps to boost your body's natural production of human growth hormone, and it has been found that short bursts of energy, followed by a short period of rest or recovery, build endurance and stamina,' says Tracey.



8 TRY TAI CHI FOR CELL RENEWAL

This ancient, slow, low-impact martial art has long been used for treating stress and anxiety. More recently, however, a study published in the journal *Cell Transplantation* found that adults who practiced tai chi for a few hours a week had more CD34+ cells than those who did brisk walking or no exercise at all. These cells are responsible for the renewal, multiplication and differentiation of cells throughout your body, helping you stay healthy and slow the ageing process. 🧘

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NEW
SERIES

MASTER THE MOVE

TURN AGEING UPSIDE DOWN



In the first of a new series taking a detailed look at popular exercises, and how to do them well, we discover the benefits of yoga's downward-facing dog with expert Leah Kim.

DOWNWARD-FACING DOG IS PERHAPS the most quintessential yoga pose. It alleviates the effects of gravity on your bones by taking everyday pressure off your back and legs. It also encourages length and extension through your back, allowing your neck and head to relax. In turn, this gives the muscles of your face a rest – think of it like a little yoga face lift!

As an inversion pose, which simply means you're upside down, the downward-facing dog helps to re-energise your blood flow for improved circulation. It's a simple move you can try without any prior yoga knowledge, and it can be added to your normal fitness regime.

It certainly strengthens and tones your whole body, provided you have proper alignment and are engaging your muscles correctly. The more consistently you practise, the more you'll feel the benefits.

Aim to hold the downward-facing dog pose for at least 10 deep breaths, as it takes time for your body to start relaxing into it. If it feels good to hold it longer, go for it.

The main thing is to ensure you're able to maintain a steady and smooth breath in and out through your nose throughout, filling and emptying your lungs completely to get oxygen flowing.

The moment you feel you're struggling to breathe easily, take a rest and come out of the pose. Similarly, if you feel any pain, stop and relax. While it's perfectly normal to feel a little achy after you've practised, if you feel anything sharp, sudden, shooting or searing, stop straight away.

Remain particularly aware of the joints in your upper body, namely your wrists, elbows and shoulders. You want to create a sense of space around these joints as you stretch and lift. Practise the pose at the beginning and end of each day to limber up for the day ahead and stretch and relax at the end of it.



HANDS

Start on your hands and knees, with your hands shoulder width apart. If you have tight shoulders, go slightly wider. Spread your fingers to make the biggest surface area possible with each hand. You want to feel as though you're reaching right into the floor and, at the same time, like you're lifting up and out of your wrists. Press down through your knuckle pads and fingertips, especially on your thumb and index fingers. Aim to eliminate any space between your hands and your mat.

FEET

Your feet should be hip width apart, or an inch or two wider if your lower back feels tight. As you look back at your feet, your heels should be hidden behind your toes, all 10 of which should be pointing forward. Reach your heels down. If they



touch the ground, great. If not, don't force them as you'll end up shortening the muscles you're looking to lengthen.

ELBOWS

If your elbows are hyperextended, meaning the joint seems as if it wants to bend the other way, bend your arms slightly. This will ensure you're using your arm muscles to hold the pose. Your inner elbows should be facing each other.

ARMS

Turn your triceps in towards each other, rather than having them bow out to the sides. Imagine you're having to carry a newspaper under your armpits to keep your upper arms close to your body. Keep pushing the floor away through your hands, feeling the strength and length through your arms.

SHOULDERS

Imagine your upper body is an elastic band that you're stretching at both ends. Try to broaden your collarbones and upper back. Lift your shoulder blades, as if you're pulling them away from your ears. Keep this feeling of lift happening through your whole back. Avoid collapsing into your shoulders as this will build tension around your neck.

LOWER BACK

Imagine you're wearing trousers with belt loops and there's a hook through the one at the centre of your back. That hook is lifting you up and back to where the wall meets the ceiling. You want to feel as though you're extending up through your hips with a slight anterior tilt of your pelvis – as if you're pushing your bum out a bit. This action lengthens the muscles along your spine as well as the hamstrings on the back of your legs.

LEGS

If your legs don't completely straighten, don't worry. As long as you're feeling some sensation of stretch through your calves and hamstrings you're getting the benefits from the move. Press back through your shin bones and your thigh bones. Check your kneecaps are facing forward and tighten the muscles around them to lift them up so you can feel tension in the quad muscles at the front of your thighs. If you feel as though your hamstrings are getting all the stretch, rather than the upper half of your body, bend your knees slightly and concentrate on pushing the floor away with your hands, lengthening down through your fingertips and lifting your hips up. Over time you can gradually straighten your knees little by little.

STOMACH

Draw your navel in towards your spine, as if your belly button is being pressed inward. Soften your front ribs so they're not poking out. Imagine someone has their hands on your ribcage, gently pressing your ribs down, back and towards each other. This action stabilises and activates your core muscles, particularly the transversus abdominis, and stops you from flexing your lower back too much, causing tension.

EYES

Once you're in your downward-facing dog, check you have the correct distance between your hands and feet. Do this by bringing your shoulders forward over your wrists, as if coming to the top of a press up. Your hips should be slightly lower than your shoulders and your legs fully straight. Without moving your hands or feet, lift your hips up and go back into your down dog. This will ensure your feet are not too close to your hands, so you're giving yourself enough length to work with and stretch into. The main intention with your head is to let it be relaxed. Make sure your neck muscles aren't tensed and you're letting go of the weight of your head. Focus your eyes on one point, somewhere natural for your gaze to fall, such as the space between your feet.

NEXT MONTH:
Get slender shoulders and arms by mastering tricep dips.

GET THE *balance* RIGHT

Want to know one of the key secrets to staying fit and healthy for longer? It's as simple as standing on one leg!

REMEMBER WHEN YOU FIRST learned to ride a bike, or stay upright for longer than five seconds on your roller skates? You were developing your sense of balance – a process that started even before you first stood up unaided.

As children, we're not afraid to test our bodies and suffer the occasional scrape. In adulthood, we become more cautious, so take fewer risks – which ironically can lead to balance-related health problems. It's vital to keep practising and fine-tuning these skills throughout your entire life. In other words, use it or lose it!

Put simply, balance is important because it stops you falling over. For such a simple function, the process itself is fascinatingly complex. To achieve perfect balance your eyes (visual system), ears (vestibular system) and muscles, tendons and joints (proprioceptive system) all need to work together in harmony. They send sensory information about your movement and surroundings to your brain, which interprets these signals and responds by sending messages to your various body parts on how to adjust and react as you move about.

Your ability to maintain good balance can decrease over time. This is largely due to changes in vision, which mean you're not so adept at assessing your surroundings. Likewise, if your hearing fades a little, balance sensors in your ears may not function as effectively. But while these issues can be trickier to remedy, maintaining and strengthening your proprioceptive system is easy.

Balance enables you to stay in control of your body's movements and encourages good agility and bone health.

In a nutshell, you just need to keep active.

'Proprioception is the ability to sense where each body part is in relation to one another, to ensure coordination and balance control,' explains physiotherapist Paul Hobrough.

'Regular physical activity enables your muscles, joints and tendons to remember how to work together effectively and makes you far less prone to injuries and falls.'

TEST YOUR BALANCE

There are two types of balance, and both need to be nurtured to ensure optimum health.

Static balance is the ability to maintain balance while stationary. Though you do this naturally every day, the simple act of standing on two feet requires your body to activate 300 muscles. Dynamic balance is the ability to keep your balance while moving, regardless of the additional demands that are put on the body. It helps you walk, negotiate stairs with heavy



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PHOTOGRAPH: JUMP FOTO. PAUL HOBROUGH IS AN ADVISER TO THE
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shopping, run, catch a ball, or dodge out of the way of a kamikaze cyclist on the pavement!

Poor dynamic balance results in decreased muscle and joint control. This instability could lead to falls, pulled muscles or joint and back problems.

We're not suggesting you take up tightrope-walking, but there are plenty of activities that put your balance to the test, and therefore improve it in the process.

Tai chi, yoga and Pilates are all extremely effective for boosting both static and dynamic balance, because you're often going from two legs to one, or working opposite sides of the body, which activates the core stabilising muscles in your torso.

You could also incorporate easy balance-boosters into your daily routine. 'To maintain mobility and stability, nothing beats functional training,' says Paul. 'Exercises that align to everyday activities are much better for your balance than gym moves, which tend to strengthen one muscle group at a time.'

For example, standing on one leg while you're brushing your teeth gives you four minutes of simple balance training each day. Stand for a



Tennis challenges your dynamic balance as you lunge and stretch.

minute on alternate legs morning and night.

Start by lifting one foot an inch or so off the floor, either by bending your knee or taking your foot out straight to the side. Lift it an inch or so more each time, as your balance skills increase. Make sure your legs don't touch and keep your hips facing forwards.

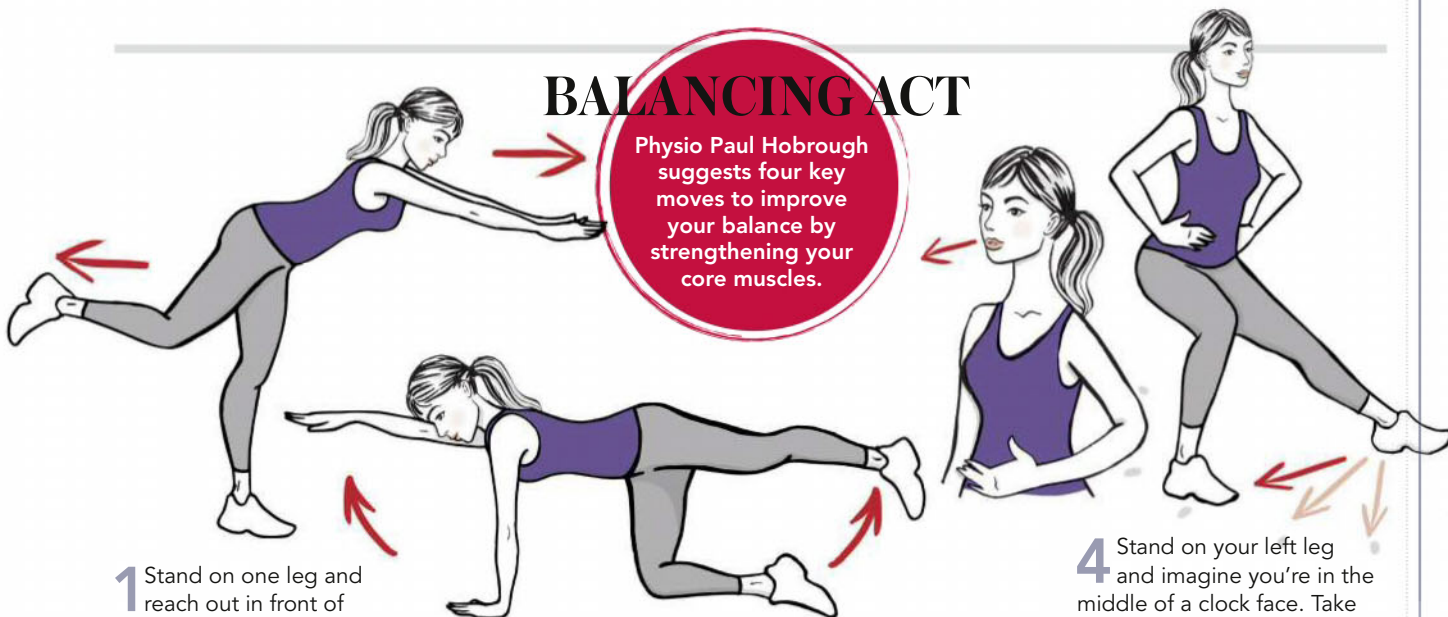
'When you're ready to progress, try shutting your eyes. It's trickier than you'd imagine because you're closing off your visual sensors. Aim for 15 seconds at first, then gradually build up to a full minute or more.'

Anything that challenges your weight distribution is beneficial, particularly for your proprioceptive system, as it reminds and retrains the various muscle groups to work in harmony with one another, keeping you strong and steady. One way to do this is to rise up as high as you can on your toes, hold for a couple of seconds without wobbling, then slowly lower back down. Aim for 10 repetitions.

You could also walk on your heels for 30 seconds at a time, a few times throughout the day. It won't be long before you start to see a big improvement. You may even be inspired to dig out your old roller skates...

BALANCING ACT

Physio Paul Hobrough suggests four key moves to improve your balance by strengthening your core muscles.



1 Stand on one leg and reach out in front of you as if to get something off a table, sending your free leg straight out behind you. Keep your buttocks tight for optimal core and balance development. Hold for 10 seconds then relax. Aim for 10 repetitions daily. For an extra challenge, lean forward and try to get a flat back, aiming for a straight line along your extended leg, back and extended arm.

2 On all fours, lift your right arm straight out in front of you and your left leg straight out behind. Maintain a flat back and tighten your stomach. Hold for a couple of seconds then switch sides. Aim for 10 repetitions daily. You'll be further developing your core while testing your balance at the same time.

3 Learn to strengthen your transversus abdominis – key stabilising muscle – by tensing either side of your belly button. This is a band of muscle that pulls in when you cough. To activate it, exhale deeply through pursed lips ten times and feel it contract on each exhalation. Repeat this 10 times daily.

4 Stand on your left leg and imagine you're in the middle of a clock face. Take lunging steps back and forth with your right foot to tap out the hours from 12 to 6, then swap sides for 7 back to 12. The further you stretch, the more balance is required. To push yourself further, try not to touch the floor with your toes each time you bring your legs back in. Aim for 10 repetitions daily. Now, do this on a wobble ball – an inflatable round cushion. Try the Fitness Mad Stability Cushion (£19.99, physiowarehouse.co.uk). 📱

THE SEARCH FOR YOUNGER LOOKING SKIN IS OVER.

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BEAUTY

We keep you up-to-date with the latest products and treatments.

17-PAGE
BEAUTY
SPECIAL!



Relax & unwind

For an all-over body boost and feel-good endorphin hit, try Mill Wheel Spa's unique Beach Hut experience, which involves lying on a bed of warm sand. The treatment replicates the feel of being on a sunny beach as you lie on the sand while the light is adjusted from darkness to sunrise, peak sunshine and sunset, all in the space of 25 minutes. Also on offer is the Heaven Angel Face Lift, which uses targeted acupressure movements to help release ageing toxins. For more information on the Staffordshire-based spa visit 3shoesinn.co.uk.

MORE YOUTHFUL SKIN IN SECONDS



For clearer, plumper skin try face oil instead of your regular moisturiser. Oils pass through the fat layer of the skin faster than creams, preventing water loss and plumping skin without clogging pores. Try Khadi Herbal Anti-Aging Oil (£11.90 for 100ml, lucyrose.biz).

The sweet taste of antioxidants!

Cocoa is widely known for its anti-ageing properties thanks to its high antioxidant levels. Esthechoc has created a chocolate bar that contains the same amount of astaxanthin – the strongest antioxidant known to science – as 10kg of raw seaweed.

Astaxanthin slows down the formation of ageing free radicals. A pack of 21 mini chocolate squares costs £35, from esthechoc.com.



THE POWER OF BARLEY



Barley naturally stimulates cell regeneration, which helps prevent signs of ageing. A new range from Alorée uses chlorophyll, extracted from young organic barley shoots, to bring you a host of anti-ageing benefits. Try its Skin Rescue Radiant Face Mask (£24). It has a delicate fragrance and leaves skin feeling refreshed and firmed. Available from aloree.co.uk.



Your ANTI- AGEING HEROES

We guide you through the tried and tested ingredients that have been proven to promote firmer, fresher skin.

IT WASN'T THAT LONG AGO that anti-wrinkle creams were fairly uncomplicated. They were basically moisturisers, making skin softer and smoother on the surface. But now, some

ingredients claim to do much more.

While we know that topical creams can't 'freeze' muscles like Botox, plump wrinkles like filler or lift sagging like surgical facelifts, some anti-ageing ingredients can make a difference.

'Some products have more effective delivery systems that allow more active ingredients to penetrate, working deeper to smooth skin says Dr Mervyn Patterson, dermatologist at Woodford Medical, a cosmetic treatment centre.

As well as advances in high street offerings, more fully customised skincare is also being developed. Geneu, a new service based in London's Bond Street, involves having your DNA analysed from a saliva swab to assess your personal collagen breakdown rate and antioxidant usage levels. The result is a two-week supply of bespoke anti-ageing serums, at a cost of £600. No doubt this type of bespoke service will become more accessible and affordable in the future but until then, here are the top five ingredients to help prevent your skin ageing – right now.

WORDS: JOCELYN BAILEY. PHOTOGRAPHS: REX FEATURES. *SOURCE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

RETINOL

WHAT IS IT? Retinol and the retinoid family are derived from vitamin A. Formulations vary in concentration and not all retinoid products have the same potency. Retinyl palmitate, retinol and retinaldehyde are available over the counter, while adapalene, tretinoin, isotretinoin and tazarotene are prescription-only treatments.

WHAT DOES IT DO?

In essence, retinoids boost cell renewal so that skin looks fresher and clearer, lines become shallower and even age spots fade. Although retinol was originally an anti-acne treatment, patients soon noticed its rejuvenating benefits. Dr Anjali Mahto, consultant dermatologist at the Cadogan Clinic and Highgate Private Hospital, says: 'Retinoids can minimise the appearance of wrinkles, slow collagen breakdown and fade pigmentation. They work by improving cell renewal and stimulating collagen production.'

ANY DRAWBACKS? Retinoids can cause photosensitivity so they're best

Use retinoids at night, as they can make your skin more sensitive to the sun.



used at night, and they're not ideal for sensitive skin or rosacea. Dr Anjali adds: 'Retinoids can initially cause redness and irritation, so it may be wise to gradually build their use from 2-3 times a week to nightly if your skin will tolerate it. It can take 3-6 months of regular use before improvements are seen.'

HOW TO USE IT: At night after you have cleansed your face.



Find it in:

- Palmer's Skin Therapy Oil for Face, £9.99, includes a low dose of retinol, plus antioxidant vitamin C and ten skin-softening oils such as coconut oil, argan oil and rosehip oil.
- No7 Protect & Perfect Intense Advanced Serum, £24.95, features retinyl palmitate plus antioxidants and claims to be the first serum clinically proven to provide anti-wrinkling benefits that improve the longer it is used.
- SkinCeuticals Retinol 1.0 Night Cream, £69, contains a high percentage of pure retinol, as well as bisabolol, which is the main constituent in chamomile, to soothe.

HYALURONIC ACID

WHAT IS IT? This is a natural ingredient that's already present in your skin. Dr Sweta Rai, consultant dermatologist at King's College Hospital, says: 'Hyaluronic acid (HA) is found naturally in the dermis where it gives your skin substance, strength and tightness. But we all lose hyaluronic acid with age, sun exposure and smoking.'

WHAT DOES IT DO? HA has spectacular moisture-retaining properties – these tiny molecular sponges can hold 1,000 times their own weight in water, which is one reason why it improves skin plumpness as well as hydration, and why beauty companies use it, including in Restylane (fillers). There is also some evidence that HA may boost collagen production*.

ANY DRAWBACKS? Because it's already present in your skin, allergic or intolerant reactions are unusual, although that doesn't mean you can't be allergic to other ingredients in the formulation.

HOW TO USE IT: In moisturising creams, serums, body lotions, even make-up.



Find it in:

- Skin Effect Anti-Ageing Face & Eye Serum, £12.49, which additionally uses papaya enzymes to increase dead cell shedding for a smoother, fresher surface.
- Estee Lauder Advanced Night Repair, £48, was one of the first to feature it, and also contains damage-neutralising antioxidants.
- Nuriss Youth Activating Hyaluronic, £75, contains 100 per cent HA, so it's more concentrated than most.



SUNSCREEN

WHAT IS IT? Sunscreens, which come in chemical or mineral form, absorb or block UV-rays so that they don't damage your skin. Think of the effect of the sun on an elastic band and how it makes the material brittle and inelastic. That, in essence, is how sun ages skin. 'Regularly wearing SPF30 or higher is recommended by dermatologists as an absolute must for good skin health and youthful appearance,' says Dr Mahto.

WHAT DOES IT DO? 'Chemical sunscreens contain ingredients that filter out the amount of UV penetrating your skin,' she explains. 'These take time to become effective and should therefore be applied about 20 minutes before going outdoors. Mineral sunscreens typically contain titanium dioxide or zinc oxide, which physically block UV instead.'

ANY DRAWBACKS? Some skins may be more sensitive to chemical sunscreens, while mineral sunscreens can leave a chalky white finish on the skin.

HOW TO USE IT: Apply it every morning to protect your skin against UV-damage.

Find it in:

- Vichy Ideal Soleil SPF50 Mattifying Face Fluid Dry Touch, £16.50, with additional moisturising agents such as hyaluronic acid and glycerine.
- SunSense Daily Face SPF50+, £20.99, with sheer matt tint, antioxidant vitamin E and niacinamide.
- Clinique Superdefense SPF20 Eye Cream, £30, which also contains hydrating, protective botanicals.





ANTIOXIDANTS

WHAT ARE THEY? Natural substances found throughout nature, including in food. Vitamins A, C and E, coenzyme Q10, grapeseed oil, green tea, lycopene, resveratrol, selenium and zinc are renowned antioxidants.

WHAT DO THEY DO? They fight oxidation, the process that turns apples brown when they're exposed to oxygen. In skin, oxidising agents cause premature destruction of collagen and elastin, making tissues more prone to wrinkling and sagging. It's like the human form of rust. Estée Lauder was the first brand to prove that topical antioxidants can have significant protective benefits. Dr Rai says: 'Antioxidants can be taken via nutraceuticals, which are oral supplements, or applied topically. There's evidence that vitamin C creams can decrease sun damage and photoageing. You can just eat antioxidant-rich foods or take supplements, but they have to go through your digestive system, which may reduce their rejuvenating effects if you're not properly absorbing them.'

ANY DRAWBACKS? Some individuals may be sensitive to particular antioxidants just as they can be intolerant to particular foods. Benign as they usually are, lutein, lycopene, beta-carotene, idebenone, even tocopherol (vitamin E) acetate and



Triple defence

Find it in:

- Nivea Q10 Plus Anti-Wrinkle Serum Pearls, £13.99, features coenzyme Q10, plus HA.
- Estée Lauder DayWear Advanced Multi-Protection Anti-Oxidant Creme SPF25, £39, contains a five-antioxidant blend and barrier-boosting lipids.
- Elizabeth Arden Prevage Anti-Ageing Wrinkle Smoother, £65, uses antioxidant idebenone, retinyl linoleate for collagen-boosting, HA to smooth and optical diffusers and silicone powder to blur fine lines.

grape seed oil have been known to cause reactions, while high levels of vitamin C can be an irritant.

HOW TO USE THEM: In day and night creams, eye creams, serums, make-up and supplements.

PEPTIDES

WHAT ARE THEY? Peptides are basically proteins that form a protective, moisture-retaining film over your skin's surface. They act as cell messengers, switching on healing, repair, cell renewal and collagen production. More recent synthetic peptides, such as hexapeptides, pentapeptides and polypeptides, also transport hydrating, repairing and renewing molecules to skin cells.

WHAT DO THEY DO? Peptide ingredients are like keys that dock in specific locks on the surface of the skin cell and this docking activates a response within the cell. At least, that's the theory. 'Pentapeptides are thought to help reverse or delay the ageing process by increasing collagen,' says

Find it in:

- Olay Regenerist 3 Point Super Firming Serum, £29.99, has the brand's peptide complex, along with olive oil derivatives and niacinamide (vitamin B3) to maintain hydration.
- Neal's Yard Remedies Beauty Sleep Concentrate, £32.50, has a tri-peptide to smooth, antioxidants from grapeseed oil, and narcissus extracts to regenerate.
- Epionce Intensive Nourishing Cream, £79, uses hydrolyzed yeast and potato peptides to boost ceramide production and reinforce a dry skin barrier.

Hydrate and firm



Dr Raj. 'However, their particle size is so large that, without the use of nanotechnology, they may not be properly absorbed, so they may not be as effective as retinol and sunscreen.'

ANY DRAWBACKS?

They can take at least four weeks to provide maximum benefits. If you are under 35, you'll have sufficiently active peptides so don't need these.

HOW TO USE THEM:

In creams for dry or ageing skins.

LOOKING FIT!

Want to tone your cheeks and hone your jawline? See results in weeks with facial fitness and sculpting skincare.

WE PUT SO MUCH effort into trying to make our skin look younger, but what we see in the mirror is only a tiny part of the story. Your skin is just 1-2mm thick and the overall shape and structure of your face does far more to create an impression of youthfulness than the minutiae of pores and wrinkles.

As you age, this structure changes – bone shrinks, fat shifts and your 42 facial muscles slowly start to reduce in size. Since many of these muscles connect directly to your skin, once they weaken, your face can start to sag. ‘Firm skin and good, healthy muscles – that’s what looks youthful,’ says skin expert Nichola Joss.

So how can you keep your facial muscles healthy? Well, as is the case for the rest of your body, exercise is the answer. Eva Fraser, who at 86 could easily pass for 30 years younger, has been teaching facial

exercise for more than 20 years and believes it hones the contours of the face, just as normal exercise firms and tones your body.

‘We use very few of our facial muscles in day-to-day life and if you don’t use a muscle, eventually it just withers away,’ says Eva.

WORK THAT FACE!

Facial exercises are by no means a new idea. They’ve been used for centuries. The 1980s and 90s saw a slew of books and videos, demonstrating all kinds of strange contortions that promised a natural facelift.

More recently, interest in the practice has been sparked by FaceGym, which offers facial workouts, with warm-up, strengthening and cool-down segments, just like a normal workout. Instead of working up a sweat, however, you get to lie back and have a special ‘face trainer’ do the hard work

Your 3-minute morning face workout

Try these simple exercises from skin expert Nichola Joss.



1 Looking straight into your bathroom or bedroom mirror, stretch your mouth wide open at the sides. Repeat this exercise six times.



2 Sing the vowels to yourself once through, over-pronouncing them as you do so – A, E, I, O, U. Sounding out each one firms and tones muscles in the face and neck.



3 Place your fingers along your eyebrows, push your eyebrows up, then close your eyelids, without scrunching. Hold for three seconds, then release. Do this once.

FACIAL WORKOUT KIT

■ **Clinique Sculptwear Contouring Massage Cream Mask**, £38, contains whey protein and green algae extract, which boost collagen and elastin production to firm the contours of your face.



■ **Use Clinique's Sonic System Massaging Treatment Applicator**, £20, over the cream mask (above) to increase blood flow and remove signs of tension from your face.



■ **Sanctuary Therapist's Secret Facial Oil**, £17.35, is a 100 per cent natural mix of sunflower, jojoba and wheatgerm oils that's ideal for facial muscle massage.



■ **Sarah Chapman Facialift**, £25, has 48 nodules that, when pulled across the face, stimulate the muscles to re-shape and lift.



for you (from £20, facegym.com). A combination of whipping, flicking, pinching and kneading movements stimulates your muscles and gets the blood pumping. Certainly not relaxing, but then what good workout is?

EXERCISE WITH CARE

Despite its long history and recent resurgence, facial exercise is still divisive. Dermatologist Dr Sam Bunting believes working your facial muscles could actually make wrinkles worse.

'The facial muscles already get lots of exercise every day,' says Dr Bunting. 'We also know repetitive use of certain muscles creates lines by exerting pressure on the overlying skin, namely horizontal forehead lines, crows' feet and the so-called 11s, which are the two vertical lines between the eyebrows. So facial exercises are likely to be counter-productive.'

Nichola agrees that care is needed. 'I wouldn't advocate doing any facial exercises that involve scrunching up your face or frowning. But after 25 years of using exercises – both on myself and on all my clients – I'm in no doubt that stimulating the facial muscles is hugely beneficial.'

'By working muscles that you don't use every day you counteract the effects of habitual movements, such as frowning and squinting. It also slows down the atrophy of the muscles, so they retain more volume and provide a better scaffolding to the face.'

So if you do want to give it a try, how do you make sure you don't exacerbate wrinkles? Nichola advises just a few minutes a day – three simple exercises for the morning, and then an evening routine, stimulating the muscles with massage. It's important you use an oil when doing this in order to avoid stretching your skin.

Like any exercise regime, face fitness takes commitment to see results – you should see a lifting effect after a few weeks, but it will take three to four months of regular practise to see more marked results. It's never too late to start, however. 'I only started doing it in my 50s,' says Eva. 'Whatever age you are, the muscles will respond.'

The skincare products you choose can complement the facial exercises you do. 'There is an exciting new focus on the morphology of the face, and we are discovering ways to formulate products that lift and firm the skin tissues to compensate for changes in the face's underlying structure,' says Dr Tom Mammone, executive director of skin physiology and pharmacology for Clinique R&D.

'Recent developments in 3D imaging techniques are allowing us to analyse the effect of products in all dimensions, so we can improve the overall structure and volume of the face. I also think in future we'll see evidence that exercising the facial muscles is a powerful way to look youthful in itself.'

Your easy evening routine

Apply face oil then do these three moves before bed.



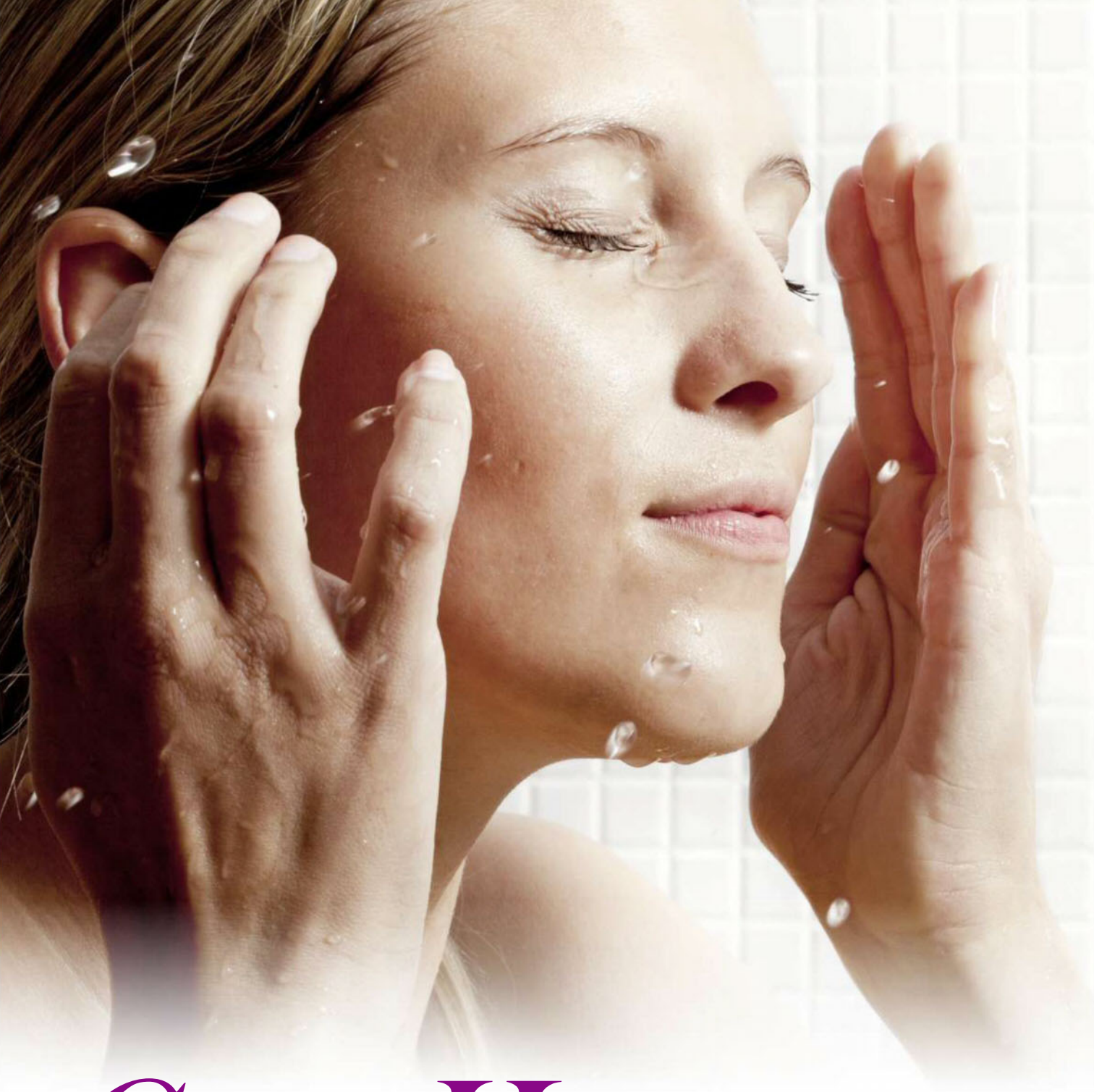
1 To firm and tone your jawline, bend your index and middle fingers on both hands and place your chin between your knuckles. Glide along your jawline to under your ears in a sweeping motion. Repeat six times.



2 To contour your cheeks, place the pads of your thumbs under your cheekbones with your palms facing outwards and gently push up. Work from the centre of the face outwards. Repeat six times.



3 To improve fine lines across your forehead, place your fingertips on the centre of your brow and sweep firmly upwards and outwards, moving towards the hairline and finishing at your temples. Repeat six times.



Get pH savvy FOR BETTER SKIN

Everyone wants to have smoother, younger-looking skin, but did you know that the pH of your products could hold the key to a more youthful complexion?

LIKE MANY WOMEN you probably cleanse, tone, moisturise and exfoliate for smoother skin. If time is of the essence, you might reach for an all-in-one foaming facial wash, or use face wipes to remove your make-up. Being diligent with skincare is top of most women's priorities, but have you ever considered the pH levels of the products you're using?

It's widely known that an alkaline environment inside your body is best for optimum health. Too much dairy, meat, sugar, alcohol and refined foods contribute to acidity, which in turn can lead to skin inflammation, immune disorders and even cancers. But when it comes to the outside of your body, a slightly acidic environment keeps you looking younger for longer.

An eight-year study published in the *British Journal of Dermatology* by skin ageing expert Greg Hillebrand revealed that the more alkaline the skin's surface, the more fine lines and wrinkles it was prone to forming. The study followed a group of individuals

who used alkaline products and a group using more acidic ones. It found the alkaline skin to be more brittle, making it prone to developing lines and wrinkles. While the women who had acidic skin had 50 per cent fewer wrinkles.

STAY OUT OF NEUTRAL

It's interesting to learn that the average bar of soap is around pH 9.5. This is too alkaline for your skin and is why your face can feel dry after washing.

'Recent tests show 78 per cent of brands on the market are alkaline,' reveals skin expert Karen Sinclair.

'Many range from pH 6-7 and claim to be pH-balanced. However, when asked to verify what "balanced" meant, 40 per cent of companies found it challenging to provide an answer, and 60 per cent referred to it as being "neutral". Neutral means the same amount of

acids and alkalis. However, your skin requires more acids in order to function healthily. If your skin continues to become damaged by alkaline products, which neutralise and strip away the supporting bacteria, it's likely to become thinner, thus leaving you more prone to wrinkles as skin loses its thickness and elasticity. Every time your skin becomes damaged it also releases free radicals, which results in inflammation.'

UP YOUR DEFENCES

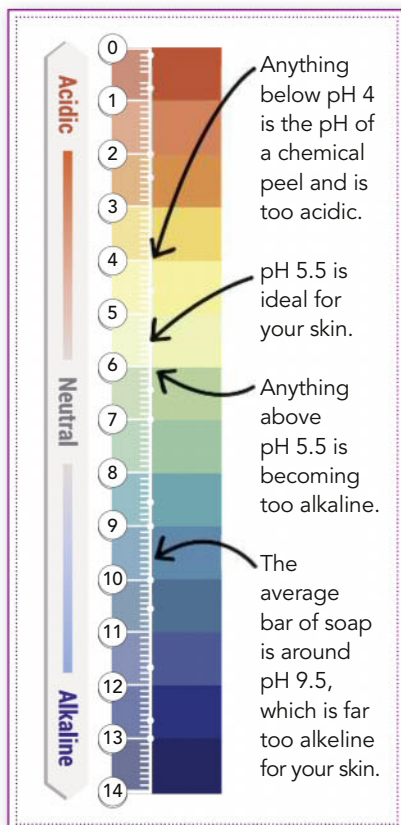
Think of your skin as a fortress, protecting the rest of your body from harmful bacteria, pathogens and other products from the outside world.

Skin is the body's largest organ and its main job is to communicate with your immune system to let it know what's going on outside, and to be your first line of defence. In order to be able to do this effectively, it needs the right care, as Karen explains.

'For your skin to be healthy and work at its best, it needs to score between pH 4 and 5.5 – and this applies to all skin types, no matter what your gender or race,' she says.

'Your sebaceous glands secrete sebum, which form what's known as the acid mantle – your first line of defence to the outside world. This acidity on your skin helps it to ward off bugs and bacteria, which are primarily alkaline in nature. The acid mantle is made up of a number of products such

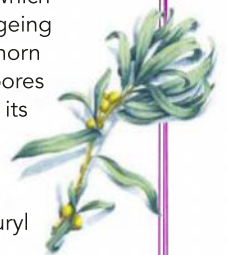
The more alkaline the skin, the more susceptible it is to wrinkles.



Karen's top tips for a youthful face



- Only cleanse once a day – any more and you'll strip away your skin's acid mantle.
- Avoid exfoliating every day. Once a week is plenty or you'll thin your skin, making it easier for wrinkles to develop. As long as your skin is naturally acidic, it will exfoliate itself.
- Try sea buckthorn oil. This contains biologically active compounds that nourish your body's cells to protect the skin from free radicals, which contribute to the ageing process. Sea buckthorn doesn't clog your pores or strip your skin of its natural oils (£9.14/10ml, amazon.co.uk).
- Avoid sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS). A common ingredient in many creams and products, this strips the skin of moisture as it helps products to foam.



SPLASH IT ON

You can even wash your face in pH-balanced water thanks to the Ionized Enagic Kangen Water System, which has been a favourite with Japanese women for 37 years. It costs a cool £2,750 (enagic.com).

as triglycerides (lipids), wax esters, squalene (another lipid) and free fatty acids. When it becomes damaged it leaves your skin's defences down and open to attack, which can trigger problems such as eczema and acne, leaving skin weaker and prone to developing wrinkles.

'Your cream of choice should be slightly acidic and made from a high percentage of natural ingredients. The closer to nature your skin can be the more it will stay balanced and beautiful,' explains Karen.

'There are a variety of pH strips available on the market to help you test your creams and serums. The most accurate way to find out would be to call the company and ask what the pH is directly, but they don't always know. Always seek out products that openly display their pH levels and look for the lower numbers, preferably between pH4 and 5.5 to support your skin's natural state.'

GET INSIDE HELP

All this science may seem a little daunting, but it's not that difficult to keep your skin in good health and wrinkle-free.

Acidic skin shows everything is perfectly in balance, and achieving acidity comes not only from the product you use on the outside, but also the food you put inside your body.

The key to the best pH level is an alkaline diet made up of a least 60 per cent vegetables and fruits that create an alkaline effect in your gut. These include dates and figs, as well as lemons and limes squeezed into drinks, and watercress, rocket and spinach made into soups and salads. Plus root vegetables, such as courgettes, aubergine and peppers, which can form the basis of curries, bakes and stews.

By keeping the inside of your body healthy and in balance this will, in turn, help to keep your skin in balance, too.



AT A GLANCE: THE BENEFITS OF SKIN ACIDITY

Keep your skin healthy, balanced and slightly acidic and you'll get more than just a healthy glow...

1 Kept at the correct acidity, your skin will be naturally protected against irritation and

inflammation, and able to absorb nutrients.

2 Your skin will be able to regulate its moisture levels, preventing it from becoming dry and sensitive.

3 Pores will be reduced.

4 Your skin's cells will be tighter and firmer,

lessening the development and appearance of wrinkles.

5 It will have the ability to naturally exfoliate, leading to new cell growth and renewal, ensuring you look younger and fresher for longer.



● Green People Age Defy+ 24 Hour Brightening is in the range of pH 4.5-5.5 (£34/30ml, greenpeople.co.uk).

● The SophytoPRO range has been developed by skin expert Karen Sinclair. Try the Zen De-stress

Moisturizer, which is pH 4.5-5.5 (£27.50/ml, amazon.co.uk).

● Murad's Renewing Cleansing Cream, Hydrating Toner and Essential-C Toner are all in the range of pH 5-6 (from £28/200ml, murad.co.uk).

“I have been using Astral since I was a teenager. My mother has always used it, my sisters use it and now my own daughter uses it. It is a family winner.



Astral is our number one skin care for our faces. Thank you.”

Rachael, 48, one of three generations of Astral users

Tell us how you use your Astral at astral-cream.co.uk

The truth is, Astral works

... for your face, neck, body, elbows, knees, legs, hands, feet ...

MAKE UP

a more *radiant* you

Subtle tweaks with how and where you apply your make-up, as well as investing in the latest age-defying formulations, can help keep you looking fresh faced and glowing.

YOUR BATHROOM cabinet may be full of moisturisers, serums and treatments that help your skin retain its

youthful radiance, but what about your make-up bag? According to research, 25 per cent of make-up wearers now want to stave off tell-tale ageing signs and are looking for make-up that plumps, smoothes or lifts.

'Vitamins F, C and E protect the skin from environmental damage and premature ageing; bisabolol, derived from chamomile, reduces inflammation and redness; squalane and hyaluronic acid nourish and moisturise the skin, while Coenzyme Q10 reduces the appearance of fine lines,' explains Derek Selby, international director of artistry at Cover FX.

'We also add a Multi Peptide Complex to regulate skin repair and support collagen synthesis for healthier, younger looking skin.'

Of course, it's not just what you put on your skin that can make a difference – how and where you're applying it also has an impact. Think about the colours and formulas you're using. If they're the same you've had for years, it's time to reassess. 'With time, our skin changes tone and texture,' explains Grace Fodor, founder of Studio 10 Beauty. 'What worked for us at 21 is unlikely to be our most flattering choice in our 30s or 40s.'

There are, however, simple techniques that can make all the difference to your eyes, cheeks and lips, as we explain here.

BLUSH YOUR CHEEKS

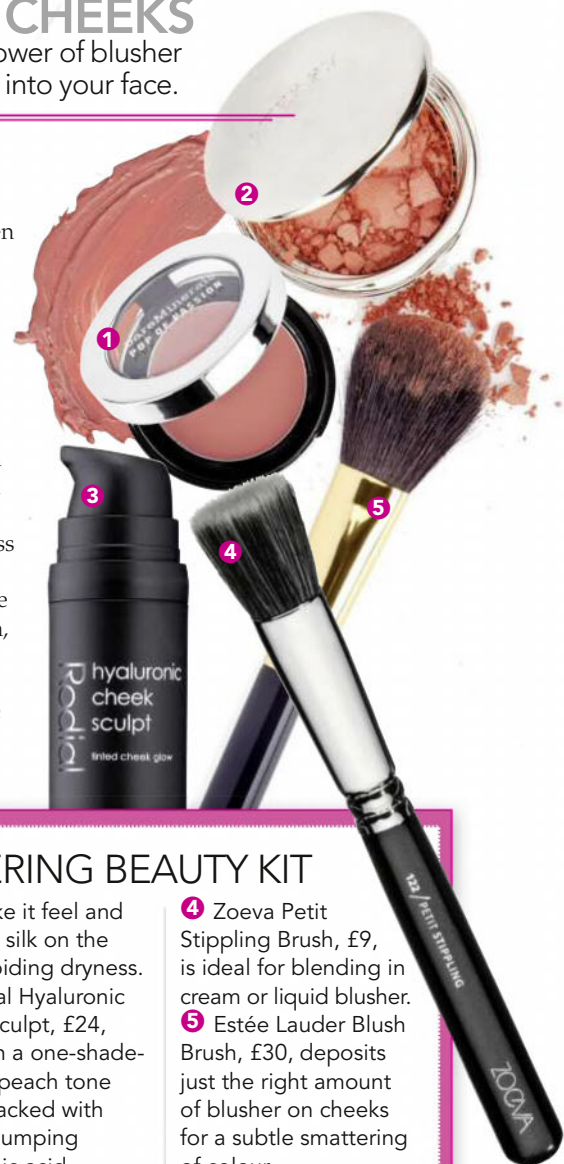
Never underestimate the power of blusher – and inject a rosy glow back into your face.

Get a youthful tone

Scientists in Pennsylvania digitally altered the tones of facial skin on women aged between 20 and 70, then asked volunteers to estimate their age. Those with little colour in their cheeks were rated the oldest, with rosy cheeks perceived as a sign of youth. Simply choose the right shade to reap the rewards. 'Fresh peach and rose tones add a youthful glow to any complexion as they're closer to the colours our skin would produce in our youth,' explains Grace. 'A peach tone counteracts redness and gives a more natural flush. It also has golden undertones that balance the blueish tinge produced by pigmentation, making age spots less visible.'

Tweak your skin's texture

Skin gets drier over time as our dermis struggles to hold on to hyaluronic acid



YOUR FACE-FLATTERING BEAUTY KIT

- 1** BareMinerals Pop of Passion Blush Balm, £20, in three shades that are infused with passion fruit seed oil and vitamin E for soft skin.
- 2** ByTerry Terrybly Densiliss Blush, £52, a powder formula with high-tech ingredients

that make it feel and look like silk on the skin, avoiding dryness.

- 3** Rodial Hyaluronic Cheek Sculpt, £24, comes in a one-shade-suits-all peach tone and is packed with cheek plumping hyaluronic acid.

- 4** Zoeva Petit Stippling Brush, £9, is ideal for blending in cream or liquid blusher.
- 5** Estée Lauder Blush Brush, £30, deposits just the right amount of blusher on cheeks for a subtle smattering of colour.

and collagen – the backbone for plumpness – so the last thing you want are formulas that dry, crack and crease. Powder blushers aren't out of bounds, but choose finely milled versions that don't soak up your skin's moisture. Or try a gel or crème blush. Soft and balmy, the pearlescent glow they create instantly warms skin. Avoid anything containing sparkle and glitter as this will highlight fine lines and wrinkles.

Blend the colour

Rosy cheek territory can be tricky as you don't want to look doll-like. 'Start at the apples of your cheeks, then blend up and outwards to the top of your ear and hairline rather than in a circle,' advises Grace. The aim is to mimic the softness of a natural flush by blending colour out. Use it sparingly. Too much applied too far below the cheekbones pulls down your face and creates saggy-looking jowels.'

Tailor your tools

When you're using powders, softly domed, medium-size blusher brushes create the most natural finish as anything too large will pick up too much pigment and cause it to spread lower onto your face. For crème and liquids, stippling brushes are best. These are flat-topped, dual-fibre brushes that give an airbrushed effect. Dip the tips into your blush then dust across a tissue before you apply to diffuse the colour. ▶



LET YOUR EYES DAZZLE

It's all about mini updates with massive impact – think groomed brows, well-placed liner and face-flattering colours.

Prep your eyes properly

Focus your concealer under your eyes where dark shadows form, then take it over lids to neutralise redness and act as a glue for your eyeshadow to stick to. Finish by dotting some in the inner corners of your eyes to stop any blueish tinges clashing with your eye shadow shades. Leave laughter lines uncovered – they're a beautiful part of who you are.

Aim for smooth lids

If your eyelids crinkle, use moisture-infused products that prevent lids from drying out, because the drier they are,

the wrinklier they'll look. Powders containing talc are a big no-no as they'll migrate to creases and sit there. 'Cream-based products tend to have a base of nourishing oils that hydrate. They're also more light reflective so lift the eye,' says Rose-Marie Swift of RMS make-up.

Keep colour in focus

If you've always worn coloured eyeshadow, don't stop now, but make sure your lash line remains the focus – anything too dark or bright beyond that can make your lids appear droopy. 'If your eyes are becoming a little pink

around the rim, avoid pinky, plum tones as you risk looking tired,' explains Hannah Martin, Bobbi Brown PRO Artist. 'Frosted pastels can also look dated. If you like cooler tones, try greys.'

Learn to use liner

To keep your eyes looking youthful, embrace eye liner – in the right way. 'Push your liner into the roots of lashes from underneath, or use an eye shadow to line your top lid so you still get the definition but it's softer,' says Hannah.

Ace your eyebrows

For natural looking, well-groomed brows, brush a lighter colour through to create a shadow behind the hair. If this seems too tricky, try a gel-based brow shaper that tints hairs and holds them in place.

Wave a magic wand

Don't overapply mascara – too much at the tips and your lashes will start to drop. Enhance the shape of your eyes by focusing on the root, using the tip of your brush to get close to the lid, then lightly sweep the wand upwards to coat each lash.



YOUR EYE-ENHANCING BEAUTY BUYS

- 1 Lily Lilo Natural Eye Pencil, £6.99, is infused with skin conditioning jojoba oil and vitamin E to produce a rich liner that glides on easily and lasts.
- 2 Bobbi Brown Long Wear Cream Shadow in Stone, £19, suits every skin tone, dries waterproof and won't work its way into fine lines.
- 3 YSL Couture Brow Shaper Mascara, £21, shades and fixes brows in place with its lightweight

gel texture, natural pigments and natty brush.

- 4 Perricone MD No Concealer Concealer, £29, contains vitamin C ester (a fat soluble form of the vitamin that's better absorbed by skin) to increase collagen production and fade dark circles.

- 5 Pür Volume Vixen Mascara, £15, bulks up lashes with its black keratin- and panthenol-infused formula.



PERFECT YOUR POUT

Pick the right formulas and most flattering colours and prolong that bee-sting smile for years to come.

Line lips and moisturise

Although lips naturally lose volume and definition over time, it's easy to fake fuller lips with a liner. 'Choose a pencil as close to your natural lip shade as possible, even if you're planning to wear coloured lipstick,' says make-up artist Jane Bradley. 'Make sure the pencil is sharp for a precise shape and take the line to the very corners of your mouth. Line them within a hair's breadth of the outer edge and keep your lips soft as you trace round them.' To avoid dry lips choose a hydrating lipstick with ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, butters, oils and vitamin E.

Big up your lips

Like skin, lips start to lose their pigment, which can lead to them looking washed out. Nude tones might feel safe but can be draining. Similarly, steer clear of dark colours like plums and browns as these make lips look thinner and harsher. The key is to follow 'the brighter, the better' rule of thumb. After all, lips are a signifier of warmth and receptiveness! 'Consider your skin tone and hair colour. The shades you used to wear may no longer suit you now,' says Jane. 'If anything, go more punchy on the lips. Bolder red and raspberry shades bring colour and life to your face.'



Go for gloss

If you thought lipgloss was just for girls, think again. Unless you have lots of lines around your lips that gloss could bleed in to, you can indulge in high-shine, on-trend lacquers. Plus, because the new textures aren't gloopy or sticky they last just as long as a lipstick. Likewise, matte formulas have come on leaps and bounds and are no longer drying or cloying, but instead are velvety and creamy. Scan the ingredients for seed oils and butters so you know you won't have to worry about chapped lips.

Crucial cover-ups

Nude coloured lip liners are serious multi-taskers. As well as enhancing your lips, they're problem-solvers too. 'You can cover any areas of pigmentation around your lip line with a flesh-toned pencil, then pat it in with your finger to blend,' recommends Jane. 🌟

YOUR COMPLETE LUSCIOUS LIPS KIT

- 1 Studio 10 Lip Perfecting Plumping Gloss, £20, stimulates collagen with omega-rich plankton extract.
- 2 Clarins Rouge Eclat in Red Paprika, £19.50, has plant waxes to protect against line-forming free radicals and stop lips drying out.
- 3 DIOR Addict Lip Maximizer,

- £23.50, fills and colours crinkly lips.
- 4 Becca Nude Lip Pencil, £18, is double ended so you can hide pigmentation, line and fill lips with just one product.
- 5 Hourglass Velvet Crème Lipstick in Fever, £22, uses antioxidants and vitamin E to keep lips moisturised.

The fair will be home
to sewing workshops...

...cooking demos,
trade stands
and more.

the **WI**
CENTENNIAL FAIR

JOIN TOP SANTÉ AT... THE WICENTENNIAL FAIR

Head to Harrogate to celebrate 100 years of the WI's achievements.

THE WI MARKS ITS centenary this year with the launch of an exciting new event – the WI Centennial Fair. From 3-6 September, at the Harrogate International Centre, the fair will be open to WI members and non-members alike, and is a celebration of all the WI can offer.

Visitors can enjoy...

- Hands-on craft workshops
- Cooking demonstrations
- More than 200 exhibitors
- Inspirational lifestyle advice from top names, including Dr Hilary Jones, Carol Smillie, Aggie MacKenzie, Kate Shapland and Dr Helen Pankhurst (campaigner and great granddaughter of suffragette leader Emmeline)

With more than 150 workshops, demonstrations and seminars taking place over the four days, you can also discover how to make the best

home-made sloe gin, pick up tips on adding value to your home from TV property expert Louisa Fletcher, join in with fun interactive sessions, such as Face Yoga and beginners' Japanese, and enjoy live choir and brass band performances.

A combination of hand-chosen exhibitors, special show offers and products not found on the high street will make for an unmissable shopping experience across five zones, each covering a key area of WI interest.

WIN tickets!

Enter our giveaway to win a pair of tickets to the event, which can be used on any day. To enter, visit www.thewishow.com/topsante
The closing date is 20 August, 2015.

Household names, including Saga, RSPB, Hobbycraft, Wilkinson Sword, Tefal, Wyevale Garden Centres and AGA will exhibit alongside independent retailers.

Whether you want to browse bespoke jewellery from the likes of Sarah D Smith Fine Jewellery and JEMS; try natural products from Salon du Savon, Apicare and Tropic; or get health and wellbeing advice from Blood Pressure UK, Hidden Hearing and APS Therapy, you are sure to find something truly unique.

To find out who'll be exhibiting, visit www.thewishow.com/exhibitors

Tickets for the fair are on sale now and cost £11.50 for WI members and £13.75 for non-members in advance (subject to booking fee). The ticket price includes entrance to all demonstrations and seminars.

To find out more about the WI Centennial Fair, and to book tickets, head to www.thewishow.com or call 0844 848 0155.

BEAUTY TOOLKIT

TREASURE YOUR CHEST

Your décolletage may well have been exposed to the sun this summer, but you can still keep your skin looking smooth and well nourished.

Protect from UV rays

Most sun damage to your chest occurs through day-to-day exposure, so sunscreen is vital. As well as protecting against UVA and UVB rays, Murad Invisiblr Perfecting Shield SPF30, £55, contains silicones that fill in fine lines so your chest looks smoother.

Hydrate and firm

Your décolletage has far fewer oil glands than your face, so double up on moisture by applying your face cream down to your bust and your body cream up to your neck. Or invest in This Works Perfect Cleavage Firming Lotion, £38, with firming larch extract.

Ditch dead cells

Exfoliate your chest twice a week but avoid coarse, grainy scrubs, which can damage skin, and choose an enzyme-based product. The pineapple and papaya enzymes in Mio Skincare Double Buff Dual Action Enzyme Exfoliator, £23, dissolve dead cells to brighten.

Swap your scent

Spritzing your décolletage with perfume every day exacerbates wrinkles and pigmentation – the alcohol dries out your skin and makes it more sensitive to sunlight. Switch to a solid fragrance instead such as Le Soft Perfume, £20, which has a nourishing shea butter base.

Tackle pigmentation

The chest is prone to age spots because low-cut tops mean it's exposed to UV. Treat them twice daily with Sarah Chapman Neck and Chest Rejuvenating Complex, £54.50, which contains vitamin C, vitamin A and vitamin B3 to break down excess melanin.

Cleanse carefully

Don't cleanse your décolletage in the shower as blasting it with hot water strips the epidermis of its natural oils. Instead, massage in a cream cleanser, such as Balance Me Collagen Boost Restore and Replenish Cream Cleanser, £18, and gently wipe off.

Reduce wrinkles

Sleeping on your side causes cleavage creases. To make skin more resilient, massage in Clarins Super Restorative Décolleté and Neck Concentrate, £56, before bed. It uses plant sugars to boost skin's collagen production and keep existing collagen elastic.



anti-ageing FOUNDATIONS



Foundations can do more than create a perfect base – these clever multitaskers help your skin look more luminous too.

MAKE-UP HAS COME a long way, especially foundation. No longer just offering basic coverage, today's high-tech formulations contain active ingredients that target skin concerns such as mattifying oily skin or minimising age spots.

It stands to reason that if you combine an age-defying foundation with a potent anti-ageing cream, you'll achieve a two-pronged approach to diminishing wrinkles, which is why some foundations act not only as make-up but as a skincare treatment, replicating the effects of a serum.

'All foundations should take a few years off, whatever your age, but the addition of active skincare ingredients such as hyaluronic acid will act as an anti-ageing booster,' says make-up artist Arabella Preston. 'The aim of a good foundation is to even out skin tone, disguise pigmentation and bring a glow back to your skin through colour correction and hydration.' A foundation with ingredients such as retinol and hyaluronic acid will help remedy dryness, while wrinkle-reducing peptides can trick your skin into thinking it needs to produce more collagen.

Another anti-ageing boost is the soft-focus optics, or 'candlelight' effect that your foundation imparts. Reflective particles scatter light so sallow skin looks more luminous and imperfections such as age spots and pigmentation are far less noticeable. The trick to masking enlarged pores and concealing imperfections is down to formulation

and technique, which becomes more crucial with mature skin.

'If your skin has become drier, try a hydrating formula, perhaps with hyaluronic acid for an extra hit of moisture,' says international facialist Abigail James. 'Effects are limited because foundation doesn't absorb into the skin like a moisturiser but, depending on key ingredients, it can have temporary youthening effects such as colour correction.'

Dewy skin looks youthful, so avoid heavy, matte finishes that will highlight dryness. Look for a lighter formulation that won't sit in fine lines and creases.

Finally, don't think of your foundation as a filler. It won't erase fine lines and wrinkles completely but, applied correctly, can significantly soften them and give a youthful luminosity.

HOW TO APPLY

Step 1: Prep your skin

Exfoliating will keep the surface of your skin fresh and ensure your foundation sits smoothly on your skin. Always

apply moisturiser, allowing it to absorb for 30-60 seconds, before you apply your foundation for an extra radiant finish. Abigail recommends being generous with your eye cream: 'The fine lines around your eyes need to be well hydrated to stop your foundation highlighting them.'

All foundations should take a few years off

Step 2: Add sunscreen

Prevention is key, especially in your 30s and early 40s. Foundations may include SPF but a broad-spectrum UVA/UVB in SPF30 or higher underneath your foundation is essential, particularly if you're using a retinol-based cream that can be sun sensitising.

Step 3: Apply foundation sparingly

For even coverage, forget sponges and

use your fingers or a brush, depending on preference. For lightweight formulations 'apply as you would your moisturiser', Arabella advises. 'Really work it into your skin, starting in the centre of your face then blending out to the hairline and jaw.' If you want to create a more groomed, perfected look, try a buffing brush to really work the

foundation into your skin and fine lines. You

shouldn't need more than a pea-sized drop for a natural finish.

While some people prefer all-over coverage, you can choose to concentrate foundation only where it's needed to even out skin tone and blur imperfections.

Step 4: Finishing touches

Only use powder if you don't like a dewy finish, but be aware that a matte finish can draw attention to lines. Keep it confined to the centre of your face, avoiding the under-eye area and cheeks. If sallowness is a concern, use a cream blusher buffed onto cheeks for a lit-from-within glow.

TRIED & TESTED



ALISON SCARFF, 47, FROM CAMBS,
ESTÉE LAUDER
PERFECTIONIST
YOUTH-INFUSING
MAKEUP SPF25, £37.

THE LOW-DOWN: Available in 20 shades, this skincare-meets-foundation is infused with the brand's Perfectionist [CP+R] Serum technology that features advanced amino acids and protein complex to help minimise lines. The ergonomic Sculpting Foundation Brush (£37) was developed specifically for this formula.

THE VERDICT: This is a light foundation, was easy to apply and blended well into my skin, giving a fairly matte finish. But it didn't last all day and I had to reapply. I'm fair-skinned so liked that it has a relatively high SPF but I'm not sure I saw youthening effects.



SPLURGE



CLAIRE POWELL, 33, FROM ROTHWELL,
ORIGINS
PLANTSCRIPTION ANTI-
AGING FOUNDATION
SPF15, £29.50.

THE LOW-DOWN: A long-wear foundation boosted with powerhouse plant extract Anogeissus, this promises to visibly correct lines and wrinkles both immediately and over time with regular use. Available in 12 shades for medium, buildable coverage.

THE VERDICT: This went on easily and evenly, and provided good coverage without feeling too heavy. It matched my skin tone well but it didn't cover the under-eye area as well as some other foundations I have used. I would use this in summer and on holiday as it's nice and light. I also liked the fact it offers SPF15.



MID-RANGE



KATY SUNNASSEE, 36, TS EDITOR, MAX
FACTOR AGELESS
ELIXIR 2 IN 1
FOUNDATION +
SERUM, £12.99.

THE LOW-DOWN: Provides medium to high coverage by reflecting light to give a radiant finish, diffusing light across the skin and blurring the edges of fine lines. Its moisturising formula includes antioxidants vitamin E and green tea to hydrate and protect. Available in six shades.

THE VERDICT: This felt smooth and covered up my red patches. Some foundations accentuate the pores on my nose but not this one and I didn't have to use concealer under my eyes, which I usually do. It felt like a serum too, and gave a nice dewy feel.



BUDGET

Free for YOU!

Look and feel rejuvenated with our fantastic giveaways. We've got **nearly £2,000** worth of prizes up for grabs.



Worth
£800

1x LUXURY CITY SPA BREAK

For your chance to win a two-night spa break in a top hotel on London's South Bank, enter our giveaway.

If you're lucky enough to win our giveaway, you and a friend will enjoy a luxuriously healing experience at the Balinese-inspired Mandara Spa, at the Park Plaza hotel on London's South Bank.

The spa's Eastern décor features a giant bamboo forest and an ever-flowing black stone fountain, which is used in Balinese culture to absorb negative energy. Traditional Balinese treatments include warm bamboo and Balinese massages. As part of the prize you will be treated

to an Elemis Pro-Collagen Quartz Lift Facial, which can temporarily reduce the appearance of wrinkles by up to 94 per cent and improve skin's firmness, so you'll leave looking fresh-faced and relaxed.

You'll also have dinner at the hotel's award-winning restaurant, Brasserie Joël, and enjoy traditional French cuisine, such as Plaise Filets Meunière and Hibiscus Crème Brûlée. For more information visit mandaraspa.com.





3 x Bodhi & Birch Rosa Rosa skincare sets

Bodhi & Birch, known for its botanical remedies and blend of Eastern and Western inspired skincare, is giving away three of its Rosa Rosa skincare sets, worth £95 each. Every set includes Clarifying Cleanser with rosehip oil, Hydrating Toner and Daily Moisturiser with shea butter, which softens and tones skin while boosting cell regeneration. Find out more at bodhiandbirch.com.

HOW TO ENTER

- 1 Visit our special giveaways website at winit.topsante.co.uk
- 2 Select which giveaway you wish to enter.
- 3 Fill in your email address and click on 'Enter This Competition'. The closing date is 5 September, 2015.

1 x CACI Microlift

Don't miss your chance to win a CACI Microlift and enjoy the benefits of facial toning in your own home. This hand-held facial toning device works by emitting impulses to firm your facial muscles and soften the appearance of lines and wrinkles. Its unique muscle gripping action helps to tone your muscles, and clinical studies show it can improve skin firmness by 38 per cent. For more information visit caci-microlift.co.uk.



Worth
£263.50

4 x MitoQ anti-ageing serums

We're giving four readers a bottle of MitoQ anti-ageing serum, worth £79. This innovative, scientifically-developed serum works by flooding cells with antioxidants and destroying free radicals, which results in softened and lightened skin and a reduction in fine lines, wrinkles, scars and brown spots. For more information visit mitoq.com.



Worth
£316

1 x EGF Platinum 7 Rejuvenating Cream

Feel like a princess with this luxurious facial cream, which contains elements of platinum and 24-carat gold to protect your skin against ageing free radicals and give a firmer complexion. Visit net-a-porter.com.



Worth
£265

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25 YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

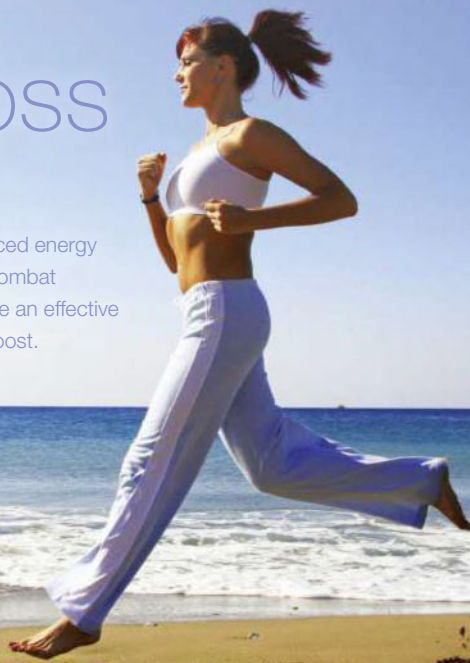
More than Weight Loss

An active metabolism is fundamental to health and wellness.

Many diets have undesired side effects: A combination of inadequate nutrition and reduced energy intake result in a decline of the body's metabolic activity as a protective mechanism to combat starvation. With the right diet, your metabolism is kept at an optimum level, which can be an effective tool in losing weight healthily and sustainably, as well as giving your overall wellness a boost.



By Katie Hipwell,
Almased Nutritionist



For many years, nutritional experts at Germany's University of Freiburg have tested the effectiveness of several diet programmes.

One programme in particular was found to yield greater weight loss results compared with other known diets. Notably, the weight lost was both effective and sustainable without any counterproductive yo-yo effect! Latest scientific findings have shown that greater weight loss in the first phase of a diet is the most important requirement for maintaining weight in the long term.

A key element to this success is a specially formulated powder made from high-quality non-GMO US soya, probiotic yogurt from Ireland and natural, enzyme-rich liquid honey from nature reserves in Mexico. The formula was originally developed by a holistic therapist to activate the metabolism and was subsequently found to be effective as a weight loss programme. The company responsible for this product is still family owned and located in Germany.

The University experts concluded that this particular powder also had significantly positive effects on the appetite-regulating hormones, leptin, ghrelin and insulin. The fact that it supports healthy insulin levels means that it is suitable for people living with diabetes, particularly those with Type 2. With these results surprising medical experts, the findings have since been published in the International Journal of Obesity¹.

Bioactive Peptides

The powder is created using a unique fermentation process during which new active ingredients, such as bioactive peptides are produced. Bioactive peptides are specific proteins which are derived during fermentation and from the digestion of milk based products. They have a health-promoting influence on our metabolic activity and can control how efficiently our body functions. Within this product, the bioactive peptides are found naturally in the soya and yogurt powder and are further formed during the special production process. To ensure optimum bioavailability of such peptides, the high-quality ingredients - soya, yogurt and honey - need to be processed in such a way that the enzymatic activity of the raw honey is not impaired. The raw honey we use has more than 100 units per kg of enzyme activity (vital for an optimum metabolism) making the product truly unique.

Bio-Power for Fat Burning

There is increasing interest in the therapeutic potential of bioactive peptides for the treatment, prevention and mitigation of various medical conditions. What bioactive peptides are present in this powder? In addition to the many active ingredients found in Almased, there is one particular well-researched peptide called Lunasin, which scientists discovered has anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, immune system and general cell health properties.

Within Almased, this peptide also plays a

significant role in lipid metabolism, helping to inhibit the deposition of fat. Lunasin's beneficial influence upon fat storage further explains why a diet programme with Almased produces superior weight loss results compared to normal dieting without Almased².

Retains Essential Muscle Mass

It has been scientifically proven that diet-induced weight loss can result in 12 - 25% muscle loss³. However, the high proportion of plant-based protein found in Almased nourishes and provides the muscles with quality nutrition, contributing to the maintenance of muscle mass even during the weight loss process. Results from clinical testing have shown that Almased helps to reduce body fat, without the loss of essential muscle mass¹ thereby retaining 100% muscle integrity. This is fundamental to the support and improvement of overall metabolic health.

Germany's Number 1.... Simply Because It Works

Almased has been Germany's best-selling weight loss product for more than 10 years. Pharmacists recommend the product more than any other on the market. Not only is the Almased programme highly effective for weight loss, it can also be used to improve and support daily fitness and performance.

"I take Almased myself, but as a daily health and wellness drink. For me, it's a guaranteed healthy meal each day." - Katie Hipwell

¹ Deibert, P et al (2004). Weight loss without losing muscle mass in pre-obese and obese subjects induced by a high-soy-protein diet. International Journal of Obesity 28; 1349-1352

² König D, et al (2008). Effect of meal replacement on metabolic risk factors in overweight and obese subjects. Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism; 52(1):74-78.

³ Weinheimer, E et al (2012). A systematic review of the separate and combined effects of energy restriction and exercise on fat-free mass in middle-aged and older adults: implications for sarcopenic obesity. American Society for Nutrition. Advanced Nutrition. 3: 119-126

Power Tips

1 INCREASE FLUID INTAKE

Throughout the Almased programme you need to ensure that there is an increase in fluids (i.e. water, herbal teas, vegetable broth) in order to help eliminate toxins and to ensure the body is adequately hydrated.



2 THE RIGHT OILS AND FATS

It is recommended to add 1-2tsp of oil (i.e. flaxseed, walnut, rapeseed, olive) to each Almased shake in order to ensure an adequate intake of essential fats that the body needs.



3 INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

To lose weight, calories consumed must be less than calories burned. Following the Almased plans in conjunction with regular exercise can lead to improved weight loss and overall fitness levels.



4 FLAVOUR YOUR SHAKES

Feel free to add a sprinkle of cinnamon, unsweetened cocoa powder, almond or vanilla essences. Additionally, for a nuttier taste and extra dietary fibre, include 1 tbsp of hemp seeds, flaxseeds or chia seeds.



Losing Weight Is Achievable When You Have A Plan

The Almased diet is simple and effective. It can be easily incorporated into your daily routine without the hassle of spending too much time preparing and planning meals.



Get Your FREE Figure Plans

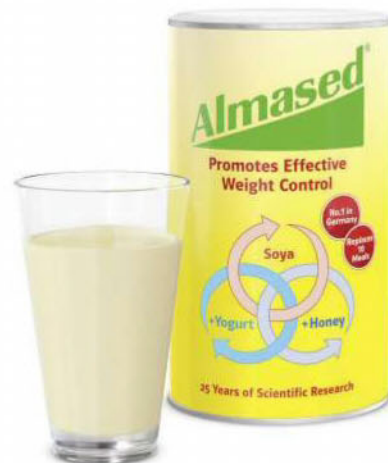
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ASK THE EXPERTS

If you have a health, fitness or beauty question for our experts, email talkback@topsante.co.uk or tweet us @TopSanteUK



BEAUTY EXPERT

Naturopathic doctor **Trevor Cates** helps you get healthier skin and hair.

Q I've noticed some brown age spots on my hands. What causes them? *Victoria, 50*

A These can appear anywhere on the body and are caused, at least in part, by sun exposure as a result of an excess production of melanin – a dark pigment that occurs naturally in the skin. They usually appear on skin that's been regularly exposed to the sun, but can also occur as a result of an unhealthy lifestyle, such as poor diet.

Some people develop age spots more than others, and this is in part due to genetics as well as lifestyle. It's thought they're a visible sign of free radical damage, which is why antioxidant-rich foods are to be embraced.

Eating a nutrient-rich diet, exercising regularly and eating lots of foods that contain high levels of antioxidants, such as blueberries, raspberries and pomegranates, can help prevent the spread of age spots. Applying a sunblock with zinc oxide will also help prevent further hyperpigmentation issues. I like the Daily Solar Protective Moisturiser from DeVita (£17, devitaskincare.com).



Limiting sun damage by using a high factor lotion will help prevent further age spots.



Relax in an Epsom salt bath and let the magnesium in the salts relax mind and body.

Q I'm going through a hectic time with a house move and two unwell, elderly parents. Which beauty products will help me de-stress? *Lilly, 45*

A When you take care of yourself, it's easier to care for others, so you're right to consider taking time out to relax, and your daily cleansing and beauty routine is perfect for this.

Take time out to enjoy the experience and, as you're applying products to your skin, remind your body and soul how grateful you are for your health and happiness.

The mind is so powerful that soon you'll feel calmer and much more in control.

You can further enhance relaxation by using essentials oils.

A few drops of lavender can be stress-relieving, as the scent soothes the senses. It has also been shown to boost your mood.

Using cleansers, serums, masks and moisturisers that feel nourishing and smell good when you apply them can also help you relax. I like the fresh fragrance of the Eminence range, eminenceorganics.com

Finally, before bedtime, enjoy a relaxing Epsom salt bath. The salts contain magnesium, which helps relax your muscles, and a few drops of calming essential oil lavender added to the water will increase the stress-reducing benefits.

Q My skin is naturally oily. How can I keep it looking more youthful as I age?

Hannah, 41

A It's important to keep your skin's pH at around 4-4.5 in order to age gracefully. This is because everything that comes into contact with your skin, including cigarette smoke and pollution in the air, can strip it of its natural oils (see page 78 for more on this).

When your skin is oily, it seems counterintuitive to apply oils to it, but certain ones, such as red raspberry seed oil, sea buckthorn oil and cranberry seed oil – which are all available from health stores – are rich in beneficial nutrients. These include vitamin A and other antioxidants that help prevent the free radical damage associated with premature ageing. Rest assured they won't clog your pores or trigger acne.

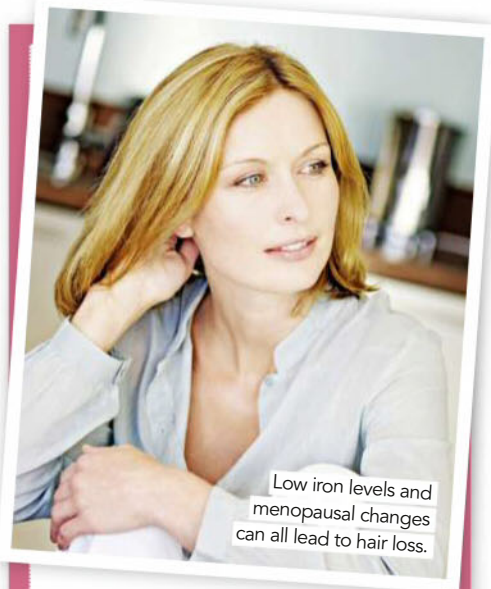
It's also important to care for your skin from within. I recommend eating antioxidant-rich colourful fruits, such as raspberries, blueberries and pomegranates,

vegetables such as kale and yams, and legumes such as black beans and kidney beans, to get inner protection from oxidative damage.

Watch your sugar intake, too. Your body uses glucose as a primary source of fuel, but if it's not used and metabolised properly, glucose can bind to your skin's collagen and elastin, which can damage skin.

This process is called glycation, and its products, known as advanced glycation end products (AGEs), cause your skin to become rigid and less elastic. The end result is cracked, thin, red skin with a weakened ability to repair itself. Ultimately, this will become more prone to wrinkles and accelerated signs of ageing.

The good news is that oily skin tends to age better than dry skin, as the oils keep skin smoother and more moist, which helps to ward off wrinkles.



Low iron levels and menopausal changes can all lead to hair loss.

Q Why is my hair thinning and what are the best thickening products? *Susie, 35*

A There are multiple causes of hair loss and it's important to find the underlying one. These triggers can include low thyroid function (hypothyroidism) and low iron levels.

With hypothyroidism, you may notice tiredness, dry skin and constipation in addition to thinning hair. To rule this out, ask your doctor to run a blood test. If your levels are low, you may need a boost of iodine, selenium and other nutrients that support thyroid function, along with medication or thyroid supplements. Your healthcare provider will be able to advise you on this.

You can also ask your doctor to run a blood test to check your ferritin levels, or iron stores. Any abnormalities here may point to iron deficiency anaemia.

Nutrients that support hair growth include biotin, zinc, B vitamins and amino acids, such as lysine and vitamin D3. These are found in meat, fish and dairy products, and can also be taken in supplement form.

If you eat well but your digestion is poor, you won't be able to break down and absorb the nutrients in your food, so it's worth taking a daily probiotic to improve intestinal flora.



Choose a skincare product that helps balance your skin's natural pH to ensure you're protecting its delicate outer layer.



NUTRITION EXPERT

Angelique Panagos advises you on eating for better hormonal and bone health.

Q What should I be eating – or avoiding – to stay healthy? *Sally 52*

A First, aim to drink two litres of water every day to hydrate cells and to ensure efficient nutrient transport and delivery around the body. Water replaces fluids we lose daily due to normal metabolism. Hydration is essential for digestion, circulation, the creation of saliva and the maintenance of body temperature.

Get a daily dose of essential fats – around 0.6-1.2g of fat per kg of body weight per day is ideal. Think of fat as an integral part of your food and include some with each meal, for example a glug of olive oil, an avocado, a handful of flaxseed, walnuts or pumpkin seeds, or a portion of oily fish. This will not only help keep your skin supple, but your brain and heart nourished, too.

Ensure you eat proteins each meal, such as chicken, lamb, fish or eggs. Include nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, tofu or quinoa with each snack and meal for growth and repair, and to help battle sugar cravings.

Enjoy fibrous unrefined foods, such as vegetables, beans and pulses, as well as wholegrains, such as brown rice, and eat a rainbow of coloured fruits and vegetables. Aim for five portions of vegetables and two portions of fruit to get your immune-boosting fix of anti-ageing nutrients, including vitamins A, C and E.

Steer clear of refined sugar in sweets, desserts, biscuits, cakes, chocolate and soft drinks, as they play havoc with your blood sugar levels and hormones. They also exacerbate the formation of wrinkles, sags and bags through a process called glycation. This is where excess sugar in the bloodstream attaches itself to protein molecules, binding to the skin's collagen and causing its fibres to stick together and become rigid, instead of lying flat.

Refined carbohydrates, such as white pasta, rice and bread, are devoid of nutrients. They don't fill you up and lead to further cravings as they cause a roller coaster effect on your blood sugar levels.

Drinking water is one of the simplest, easiest ways to help your skin stay younger looking.



Q Which foods will help combat menopausal symptoms? *Penny, 48*

A The best way to support your hormones is to balance your blood sugar, so avoid refined foods and stimulants, such as white bread, which convert to sugar very fast. Also avoid stimulants such as sugar, coffee and alcohol, while enjoying a whole-food diet of fruits, vegetables and wholegrains. These give you a more even blood sugar level, reducing the chance of hot flushes and mood swings. Eat little and often, including protein in each meal, and eat plenty of 'good' essential fats – omegas 3 and 6. These may help reduce skin ageing, vaginal dryness and joint inflammation as they have anti-inflammatory properties to keep cells more elastic. Snack on raw nuts and seeds, add ground flaxseeds to smoothies, and drizzle rapeseed oil on salads. Phytoestrogens help your body to balance hormones.

These are found in lentils, beans and chickpeas, which can be added to salads.



Find the right balance to help protect your bones, largely eating foods such as green, leafy veg, nuts, seeds and oil, with a bit of red meat, cheese and eggs.



Q I don't like dairy products. What should I eat to keep my bones healthy? *Nadine, 33*

A The food we eat has a significant effect on bone health. Some foods leave an acid residue when metabolised, while others an alkaline one. What's important for bone health is the balance between the two. Calcium acts as an alkaline buffer. When too much acid-forming food is consumed, the body leaches calcium from the bones to counteract the effect, weakening bone structure.

Aim for 80 per cent of your daily intake to be alkalising foods, including berries, apples and pears, dark, leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds, oils, apple cider vinegar and green and herbal teas. The other 20 per cent should be acid-forming foods, including red meat, cheese, eggs and pasta. Also, try sipping a little apple cider vinegar in water with your meal to increase calcium absorption from your food.

For healthy bones choose:

- Magnesium-rich brown rice, lentils, nuts, sunflower, pumpkin and sesame seeds.
- Egg yolks and oily fish. These contain Vitamin D, which helps your body absorb calcium and phosphorus.
- Blueberries, red peppers, blackcurrants, strawberries, tomatoes and sprouting seeds, which are all rich in Vitamin C.

Avoid or reduce your intake of:

- Tea and coffee. These have an acidic effect and the tannin binds calcium and iron in the gut.
- Fizzy drinks. These contain high levels of phosphorus, which leaches calcium from bones.



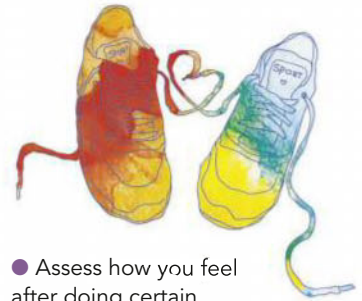
FITNESS EXPERT

Dr Karl Knopf advises on exercising safely and dealing with knee pain.

Q I get a lower back ache after exercising and have been told my glutes are tight. Will Pilates help? *Michelle, 43*

A Yes, your glutes may be tight, but it could be your piriformis muscle, which runs from your buttock to your pubic bone. However, flexibility is more complex than just one muscle group being too tight. Joseph Pilates explained it best when he said: 'Strengthen what is lax and stretch what is tight'. You need to test the flexibility of your back muscles, hamstrings and hip flexors and, using Pilates or yoga, focus on those that are tight.

A common cause of lower back ache is muscle strain, which can be relieved with rest. A more serious concern is if the pain runs down your leg, as this could be caused by a herniated disc. If the pain radiates to your hips or bum, or is long-standing, consult a health professional. The following may help in the interim:



- Assess how you feel after doing certain exercises, as some aggravate lower back pain, such as running on hard surfaces, which can increase the impact on the lumbar spine, placing too much load on the discs. Also, check your trainers are supportive.
- Ask a personal trainer to assess your technique while exercising to see whether you're engaging the right muscles.
- Get into the daily routine of doing core strengthening and flexibility exercises.

Q I have osteoarthritis symptoms in my knee, but don't want to stop exercising. Any advice? *Izzy, 49*

A Before you self-diagnose, make sure osteoarthritis is the problem. Knee pain can be caused by numerous conditions, such as torn tissues. Even a problem in another part of your body, such as a sprained ankle, can change your gait and cause pressure and pain to your knee.

Anyone with knee pain should make sure they're as lean as is healthy. Every pound of extra fat equates to four pounds of pressure to the knee joint. You should also work on improving the strength of the muscles at the top of your thighs as these support your legs. Try wall squats – put your back to the wall and squat down half way, holding the position.



If knee pain strikes, look at your posture and gait.



HEALTH EXPERT

Dr Chidi Ngwaba tackles the effects of stress, hypertension and the menopause.

Q Could the stress I suffered when I was younger have affected my health? *Eve, 38*

A There's no doubt that excessive stress can put a strain on your body, potentially leading to long-term health problems.

However, your body is amazing and the good news is that it will repair itself, as long as you can keep your stress levels in check to prevent further damage.

Stress attacks the body in many ways. Rising stress levels cause your blood pressure to go up, which means your heart is under more strain. This can cause stretch marks in your arteries, which are a haven for fats and cholesterol to be stored. Stress hormones can also cause your arteries to widen, adding to the rising blood pressure.

You can keep your stress levels in check with simple, gentle exercise. Just a one-hour walk every day is enough to keep your blood pressure down, relieve stress and allow your body to recover and repair.

Sleep is also crucial in allowing your body to repair itself. While your body rests it doesn't have to work as hard and is able to put all its energy into repairing any damaged tissue.

Many of life's demands can cause us stress and everyone deals with these differently. It's important to work out the crux of your anxiety in order to manage it appropriately in the long-term.

Q My menopause has started early. I've read this can damage the heart. Should I worry? *Sally, 44*



A It's true the menopause can affect heart health. Oestrogen makes your arteries softer and more pliable, and when they're softer they expand more easily, which keeps your blood pressure down, reducing the chance of a stroke. Oestrogen also lowers bad cholesterol and boosts good cholesterol.

Once you go through the menopause, your oestrogen levels drop, which leaves you more exposed to heart disease and other problems, such as hypertension and strokes.

A healthy diet and lifestyle, with lots of fruit and vegetables, aerobic exercise, avoiding foods high in salt, sugar and trans fats, and keeping your stress levels down by meditating are key to keeping your heart and body in tip-top condition. If you're worried about going through the menopause, your doctor may be able to recommend alternative treatments to alleviate the symptoms. These include HRT, meditation and yoga.



Swimming is an ideal way to stay fit and help keep your blood pressure in check.

Q I've been diagnosed with hypertension. What's the best diet and exercise for this? *Eve, 55*

A Hypertension means your blood pressure is continually higher than the recommended level, but it rarely has noticeable symptoms. If symptoms do show, they include headaches and blurred vision.

Left untreated, high blood pressure increases your risk of a heart attack or stroke. The only way to know there's a problem is to have your blood pressure measured, and you should have it checked at least once a year after the age of 35.

Walking, a leisurely bike ride or a swimming session are great ways to keep your blood pressure in check and stay fit without putting too

much pressure on your body. High impact aerobic exercises aren't advised for people with hypertension as they cause blood pressure to rise, increasing the risk of strokes.

In terms of diet, cut down on sugary foods, which narrow your arteries making it harder for blood to pass through. Salt can contribute to high blood pressure as it makes you retain water, which pushes up the pressure in the blood vessels.

Include greens in your diet every day, as these release a chemical called nitric oxide, which helps to keep your arteries open. Laughing and doing fun activities also releases nitric oxide.



RELATIONSHIP EXPERT

Veronica Pretelt, of wellbeing clinic Anamaya, helps you handle tricky conversations regarding ageing parents.

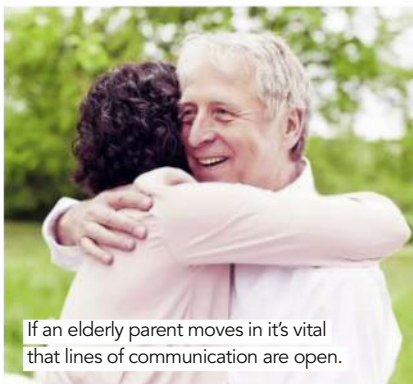
Q How do I broach the subject with my husband of my dad coming to live with us? *Kate, 36*

A Conversations about ageing parents and their future care are not easy to have with a spouse. The sooner you can start discussing this, the better it will be in order to avoid having to make these decisions in a moment of crisis.

First, be ready to openly listen and understand your partner's feelings and concerns. Look back to previous occasions when you've had difficult conversations, or when you've come together as a team to manage life's challenges. Think about what was helpful to both of you at the time.

Your father's increasing needs will become both your responsibilities, so create strategies on how to best communicate with one another about concerns that might come up along the way. Look out for support groups in your area that your father might be able to access, enabling him to have a life of his own, as this will be critical for all of you.

Lastly, but very importantly, will be to make a concerted effort to ensure your privacy as a couple is not lost and that you continue to nurture your relationship. Drawing on each other for support and strength will be crucial in this new phase of your lives.



If an elderly parent moves in it's vital that lines of communication are open.



Sharing your thoughts and feelings with a loved one will help to heal past rifts.

Q My mother is terminally ill and for the first time in her life has become sentimental. Before, she was always brusque and I'm finding this new, friendlier attitude hard to accept and deal with. Any advice? *Rose, 50*

A Receiving the news that a parent is terminally ill can evoke all sorts of reactions.

Experiencing mixed feelings when the relationship has been a strained or alienating one in the past is common.

Feelings of anger, resentment and guilt may co-exist with those of worry and sadness.

As this is a highly significant life event, with many mixed emotions, talking to a therapist to help you process these feelings might be helpful.

Above all, it's very important

to be honest with yourself about what you are feeling.

It seems your mother is also thinking about this, and through her change of attitude she might be trying to repair your relationship in some way before it's too late.

This can be an opportunity for you to think about whether you would like to have a chance to establish a new relationship, and how best to share your feelings with your mother so you can give some closure and healing to what must have been very difficult moments in the past. 🧠

WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

Our next experts will answer questions on: speaking with confidence ● yoga moves for happiness ● harmonious relationships ● dental and oral health ● stressed skin. Send questions to talkback@topsante.co.uk – please state if you want to remain anonymous.

WRITE
TO US

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VITABIOTICS
WHERE NATURE MEETS SCIENCE

FOOD & DRINK

Eats, treats, teas and nifty gadgets for a healthy September.



A versatile meat, try basting crab in curry paste and serving in a prawn cracker. For the recipe see fishisthedish.co.uk/recipes.

NUTS ABOUT POPCORN

Popcorn has been transformed from a cinema treat to a healthy snacking choice. The air-popped variety gives a fat-free wholegrain fibre boost of 1.2g per 30g, and is only 30 calories. Propercorn's Smooth Peanut & Almond is gluten-free and has just 130 calories per bag (£1.69, nationwide). For those who don't like nuts, Metcalfe's new Honey Bee flavour is only 117 calories a bag (£1.59, Sainsbury's).



Claw back to health

Brown crab, locally caught, is in season right now. The delicate white flesh not only has a deliciously sweet taste, it's a great option if you're watching your weight. A 100g serving of crab meat is low in fat (10g) but high in protein (18g), which

means it sates your appetite and keeps you fuller for longer. It's also a source of omega-3 fatty acids, which have anti-inflammatory properties, plus minerals such as copper and zinc, which all support your immune system. Don't have a local fishmonger? Buy it fresh at supermarkets.



Healthy food in a hurry

We love this handy Sagaform Yoghurt Cup that holds yoghurt, with a separate compartment to keep your fruit, cereal or nut toppings dry. It's made of durable polystyrene plastic so it stays safe in your bag while you're on the go. £6, from sciencemuseumshop.co.uk.

Get a Vitamin C hit

Kiwi fruits are known to be a good source of vitamin C, but this new golden-fleshed variety has three times as much as an orange. The Zespri SunGold also has a low glycaemic index and balances blood sugar levels to help keep your energy up. Available in supermarkets, priced at around £1 for three.



A CUP OF CHAKRA TEA

We were keen to try the new range of herbal 'Positiviteas' by yoga teacher Ellie Wharton. Each tea links to one of the seven chakras of the body to help cleanse and heal. Two particularly impressed us...

Just add boiling water to balance your chakras!

Solar Plexus/Achieve:

which gives a natural caffeine boost, with lemongrass and ginger to aid digestion.

Throat/Inspire: which has liquorice to soothe the throat, and peppermint to cleanse the stomach (£5.50 for 15 bags or £33 for a box of all seven, positivitea.london).



COOK YOURSELF young

Food has the power to turn back the clock, and here to share her favourite anti-ageing recipes is naturopath and author Elizabeth Peyton-Jones.

FOOD IS FULL OF POWER. It provides vitamins, minerals, protein, amino acids, enzymes, essential fatty acids, flavonoids, antioxidants and other nutritional nuggets. It produces energy and repairs your body. It contains almost everything you need to survive. Yet today much of our food comes in boxes and packets and this undermines our understanding of its intrinsic power.

In my book, *Cook Yourself Young: Harnessing the Power of Food*, it seemed important to me to reacquaint people with that fundamental food-body-power connection. If you want to feel fresh, awake, vibrant, youthful, inspired and ready for new adventures, look at what you eat. If you want to have clear, glowing skin, sparkling eyes, a lean physique, glossy hair, nails and a body that works seamlessly well, as well as stave off colds, flu and other bacterial illnesses, your diet is fundamental.

My book has seven gentle principles that include ditching processed foods, only using cooking processes that maintain maximum nutrients, adding plenty of nuts and healing herbs and spices to your diet, and eating 40 per cent raw to keep your blood slightly alkaline, which is its natural state of being. I can't promise miracles, but I know from experience that when people change what they eat, they start to feel better remarkably quickly.

THAI FISH CURRY

This is a nice, light dish for summer eating, which is very alkalising and nutrient dense. The spices liven up your digestion, while the coconut gives a very 'clean' taste. You can make the base of this the night before and let the flavours mellow a bit, then heat it through, place the fish on top and steam it. Serves 2

- 1–2 tsp green Thai curry paste, to taste (make your own or buy it)
- 1 lemongrass stalk, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 75ml organic coconut milk, bought or home-made
- 100g aubergine, chopped into cubes
- 3 kaffir lime leaves, shredded
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2.5cm root ginger, finely chopped or grated
- ¼ red pepper, thinly sliced
- ¼ orange pepper, thinly sliced

- 100g sweetcorn, shaved from the cob
- 150ml vegetable stock, ideally home-made
- 4 drops liquid amino acid (buy in health shops), or pinch of Himalayan or Celtic salt
- 2 pieces of white fish (haddock, monkfish, red snapper, plaice), chopped into bite-sized pieces
- Handful of coriander, chopped

1 Fry the curry paste and lemongrass in the coconut milk until the mixture is thick and very aromatic. Add the aubergine, lime leaves, garlic and ginger, cover and simmer, but do not over-cook. Add the peppers and sweetcorn and allow to cook for a few minutes more.

2 Add the stock a little at a time, keeping the thickness of the curry. Add the amino acids or salt. Simmer for a while, then place the fish on top, cover and steam until cooked. Sprinkle with coriander and serve.



Let's hear it for lemongrass

Lemongrass is widely used in Thai cooking, much-loved by Asian chefs for its delicate, fragrant taste. Seven essential oils are found in various types of lemongrass, many of which have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

PHOTOGRAPHS: YUKI SUGIURA

BARLEY SALAD WITH FIGS AND ROCKET

Barley is an under-used, under-valued grain, but it's a great weapon in your anti-ageing armoury. It helps control blood sugar, reduces cholesterol and visceral fat, which is the health-damaging stuff that wraps around your internal organs. Barley is low in calories yet leaves you feeling fuller for longer. This salad is a tasty mix of antioxidant, digestion-boosting ingredients. Serves 2

- 100g pearl barley
- 4 fresh figs, quartered
- 50g rocket leaves
- 2 spring onions, sliced
- Leaves from a small bunch of flat-leaf parsley or coriander, roughly chopped
- 30g almonds, roughly chopped
- Juice 1 lemon
- 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 50g feta cheese, or ½ avocado (optional)

1 Tip the pearl barley into a sieve and rinse well under cold water to remove the excess starch. Pour into a pan and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer over a medium-low heat for 40–50 minutes, until tender but with a slight bite. Drain and run under cold water again until cool. Drain once more. Set aside in a large salad bowl.

2 Combine the figs, rocket, spring onions, herbs and almonds with the barley. Toss through the lemon juice and oil, then crumble over the feta or slice over the avocado, depending on which ingredient you are using.



Figs to the rescue

High in feel-good natural sugars, as well as mood-boosting magnesium, figs are rich in potassium, which helps to lower blood pressure. Added to this is their health-boosting antioxidant hit of vitamins A, E and K that all contribute to health and wellbeing.

TOP YOUTH-BOOSTING FOODS

- 1 Avocado** – aim to eat this four times a week for younger-looking skin, hair and nails. Packed with 25 vital nutrients and antioxidants, including skin-boosting vitamins C and E, it's a good all-round age minimiser.
- 2 Cucumber** – nothing beats this fruit for glowing, dewy skin. It's high in silica, which helps to keep your skin's connective tissue strong, reducing wrinkles and sagging.

- 3 Hemp seeds** – these are high in omega-3s, which, among other things, reduce the level of cholesterol triglycerides (or fats in the blood), helping to lower the risk of heart problems. They're also high in digestible protein, which helps to boost your energy levels, and are great for older, dry or problem skin as they help to protect against harmful free-radical damage.



SPELT PIZZA WITH SPRING ONIONS AND ARTICHOKE

My take on traditional family TV food, this will leave you with a spring in your step. You can change the toppings but, if you're on a detox, artichoke is great for the liver and tomatoes are an antioxidant. The herbs also help with immunity and rosemary is said to improve memory. Serves 4

FOR THE TOPPING

- ½ onion, cut into chunks
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- 1 tsp avocado oil
- 4 large tomatoes, peeled, deseeded and roughly chopped
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- Pinch Himalayan or Celtic salt
- 4 artichoke hearts in oil, drained and sliced
- 8 spring onions, sliced lengthways
- 2 tsp roughly chopped rosemary leaves
- 50g goats' cheese (optional), crumbled or grated

FOR THE DOUGH

- 250g wholegrain spelt flour, plus more to dust
- Pinch Himalayan or Celtic salt
- 2 tsp baking powder

1 Start by making the sauce for the topping. Place the onion and garlic in the bowl of a food processor and blitz until puréed. Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the onion and garlic mix. Fry until slightly golden. Blitz the tomatoes in a food processor until puréed. Add the tomatoes to the cooked onion mix with the oregano and salt. Continue to cook the mixture until thickened; this should take about five minutes. Set aside to cool.

2 Preheat the oven to 240°C/Gas 9. To make the dough, sift the flour into a bowl and stir in the salt and baking powder. Make a well in the centre and pour in the oil and up to 150ml of warm water to make a firm dough. Bring together with your hands, adding extra water if necessary. Knead briefly.

3 Divide the dough into two and roll out on two lightly floured, non-stick baking sheets into large rectangles. Spoon over the sauce, then scatter the remaining toppings over both pizzas.

4 Bake in the oven for eight to 10 minutes, until the base is burnished and the toppings are golden. Serve immediately.

COURGETTE SPAGHETTI WITH TOMATO AND PINE NUTS

Good for detoxing and weight loss, this is delicious too and, if you cut and cook the courgettes correctly, they'll taste just like al dente pasta. Serves 2

- 2 courgettes
- 2 tomatoes
- 50g pine nuts
- 150ml vegetable stock, ideally home-made
- 20g root ginger, finely chopped
- 8 basil leaves

1 Wash the courgettes thoroughly and, with a peeler, slice into thin slices, or, if you like a thicker feel, cut lengthways into small thick strips, like spaghetti.

2 Peel the tomatoes: make a small cross-shaped incision at the base of each, then soak in boiling water for 15 seconds or until the skin is beginning to come away from the flesh. Remove the tomatoes with a slotted spoon and plunge into ice-cold water. Carefully peel the skins away, then chop the tomatoes very finely.

3 Roast the pine nuts until lightly bronzed, then place them in a dry frying pan over a medium heat and cook, stirring, until they turn a shade darker and smell toasted. Tip out on to a plate to cool.

4 Put 100ml of the stock in a saucepan with the tomatoes and ginger and simmer slowly for about five minutes, or until the stock has reduced. Add the rest of the stock and the courgettes. Simmer for a further minute-and-a-half or until the courgettes have wilted. Tear in the basil and mix together.

5 Take off the heat and sprinkle with the pine nuts.





Go nutty for hazelnuts

Hazelnuts are a good source of folate, which helps to balance levels of the amino acid homocysteine – high levels of which have been associated with heart problems. They're also rich in heart-friendly unsaturated fats.

RAW VEGAN CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE

A treat for anyone who's gluten or dairy intolerant, or a vegan, this is tasty and rich in nuts, vanilla and cinnamon, so it's mood-enhancing and nutritious, too. But remember that sweet is sweet, so don't eat the whole thing and expect to feel youthful! Small slices work best.

Serves 8

FOR THE FILLING

- 260g raw cashew nuts
- 1 small courgette, peeled and chopped
- 25g raw cacao powder
- 85g maple syrup (optional)
- 1 tbsp vanilla powder, or seeds of 1½ vanilla pods
- ¼ tsp Himalayan or Celtic salt
- 43g coconut oil, melted

FOR THE CRUST

- 100g almonds
- 100g hazelnuts
- 90g Medjool dates, pitted
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon (optional)
- 1½ tbsp coconut oil

TO DECORATE

- 100g strawberries
- Pinch black pepper
- 1 tbsp cacao nibs

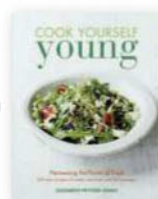
- 1 For the filling, soak the cashew nuts for two hours, then drain.
- 2 For the crust, blend the nuts and dates in a food processor, add the cinnamon and coconut oil and blend until well combined. Line the base of a 20cm springform cake tin with greaseproof paper. Press the crust down evenly inside the tin so it is well compacted,

then place in the freezer for 30 minutes.

3 Return to the filling: chop the courgette into four pieces. Blend the drained cashew nuts until smooth, then add the courgette, cacao, maple syrup, vanilla and salt. Finally, mix in the melted coconut oil. Blend until smooth, then spread over the top of the crust. Return to the freezer and leave to set.

4 Take the cheesecake from the freezer 30 minutes before serving. Slice the strawberries, scatter them with the pepper, then arrange them on top of the cheesecake and scatter over the cacao nibs.

Recipes from *Cook Yourself Young* by Elizabeth Peyton-Jones. Photographs: Yuki Sugiura (Quadrille, £14.99).



You use it to
face the day
We use it to
face cancer



look good feel better

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Focus on EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

Good for your heart, skin, brain and more, this oil packs a healthy punch!

WHETHER DRIZZLED over salads or coating kebabs, olive oil is a mainstay in kitchen cupboards. In the UK, 28 million litres of olive oil are consumed every year, but as recently as the 1950s it was only available at high street chemists. One of the earliest clinical uses of olive oil in the UK was to help loosen earwax! But clearly there are plenty more ways to benefit from it. For a start, you're less likely to have a stroke if you eat it, according to French research. Almost 8,000 people took part in a five-year study, and those who used the oil daily had a 41 per cent lower risk of stroke than those who didn't.

Go for the extra virgin option

Ensure you get the best health benefits by using extra virgin olive oil. Extra virgin is the result of the olives being cold pressed, with no chemical interaction or heating, so all the nutrients and flavour are retained. Virgin or regular comes from a quicker, more processed pressing.

Extra virgin olive oil has a high mono-unsaturated fatty acid content, otherwise known as oleic acid, which helps to prevent plaque build-up in arteries. This is why a Mediterranean diet – where people consume four tablespoons a day or more – is praised for being so heart-healthy.

Oleocanthal, found in extra virgin olive oil, is a phenolic compound – a natural antioxidant. It is so revered by the science community there's an Oleocanthal International Society dedicated to its research. One of the most promising findings is that oleocanthal causes cancerous cells to rupture, releasing enzymes that kill the mutated cells without harming healthy ones. Oleocanthal has also been shown to help reduce the early onset of Alzheimer's by blocking harmful toxic proteins that build up around brain nerves and neurons.

Embrace the beauty benefits

There's a reason why the ancient Romans used to bathe in olive oil, and Edwardian beauty parlours had nail baths filled with the stuff. It's all thanks to the polyphenol content – plant-based antioxidants – which helps with cell renewal. The oil helps combat dehydration in skin and hair too, which is more common

when we get older. This is thanks to a lipid called squalene found naturally in olives, which helps restore skin's elasticity.

How to use it

● **Energising skin scrub:** Shake up 4 tbsp olive oil, 2 tbsp coffee granules and 2 tbsp each sea salt and brown sugar in a jar. Brush onto your skin in upward motions towards your heart to improve circulation.

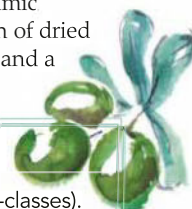
● **Super-salad dressing:** Drizzle summer salads with a shaken-up mix of 3 tbsp olive oil, 3 tbsp each of lemon, lime and grapefruit juice, ½ tsp each of white pepper and sea salt, and 3 tsp spirulina for a nutrient boost, including B vitamins and iron.

● **Mediterranean marinade:** Massage this Italian-inspired mix into meat or veg. Blend 60ml olive oil, 30ml balsamic vinegar, 2 tsp sea salt, 1 tsp each of dried oregano, thyme and marjoram, and a handful of fresh chopped basil.

BECOME A CONNOISSEUR

Olive oil sampling is all the rage (see www.oliveoil.org.uk/tasting-classes). So what are the differences? 'Greek oil has herbaceous tones,' says olive oil expert Judy Ridgway. 'Italian oil has nut-like flavours. Sicilian oils with the variety Nocellara del Belice in the blend often have a touch of tomato in their flavours, while Spanish oil has fruity tones.'

WORDS: KATHERINE WATT, JUDY RIDGWAY IS THE AUTHOR OF REMARKABLE RECIPES. FROM THE PEOPLE WHO REALLY KNOW ABOUT EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL - THE PRODUCERS PHOTOGRAPHS: STOCKFOOD, SHUTTERSTOCK



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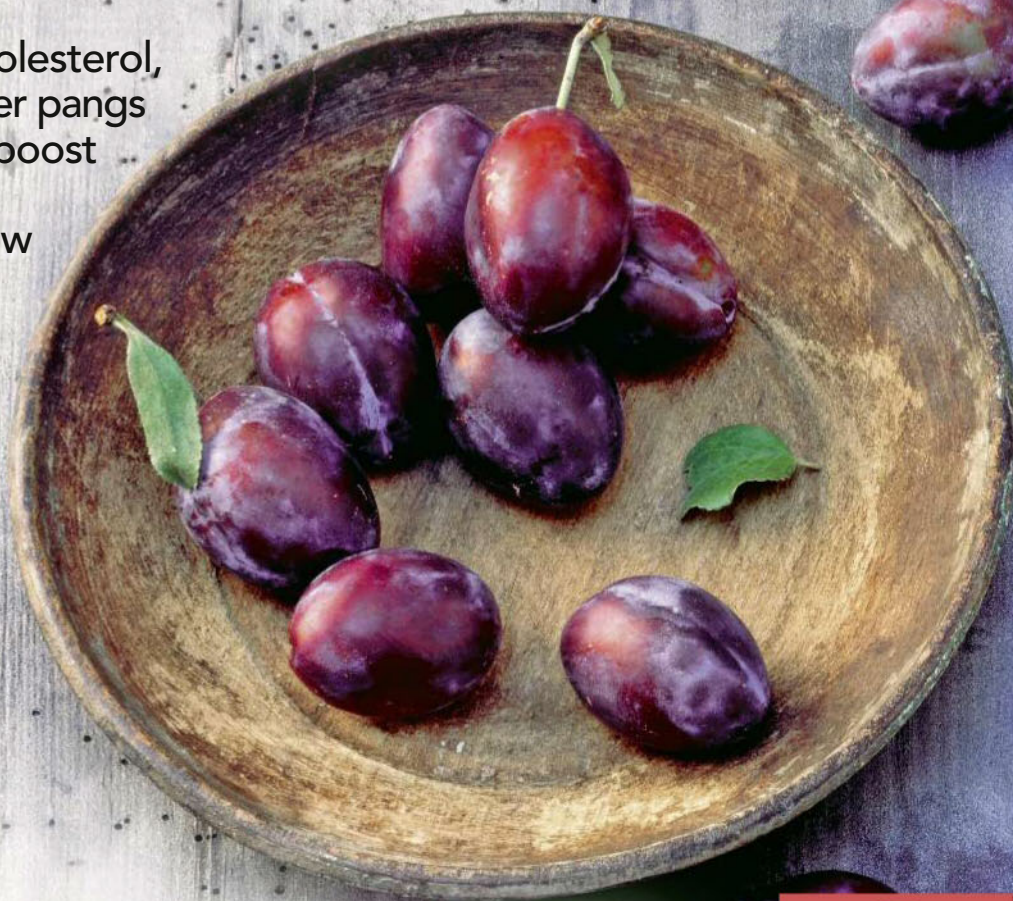


1 INGREDIENT, 5 WAYS

PLUM

BENEFITS

They lower cholesterol, stave off hunger pangs and can even boost your memory. With plums now in season, our tasty recipes make the most of this wonder fruit.



WHEN IT COMES to giving us a healthy boost, nothing beats the humble plum. Weighing in at just 46 calories per 100g (one-and-a-bit plums), it has no saturated fats and a hefty vitamin and mineral punch.

Now's the time to enjoy these nutrient-packed lovelies while they're in season and plentiful, both in the garden and on supermarket shelves.

Their high potassium content means plums can help manage high blood pressure. Added to this, their reddish-blue pigment, known as

anthocyanins, have been shown to mop up harmful free radicals, helping to boost memory and protect us against many forms of cancer.

Easy to incorporate into cakes, rich sauces, chutneys, energy-boosting bars and more, plums are a versatile ingredient, adding immune-boosting antioxidants, fibre and vitamin C to a range of dishes, as well as a naturally sweet taste.

Here we make the most of this delicious fruit to help you create meals, snacks, cakes and delicious energy bars that will keep you feeling fuller for longer.



Each month, **Top Santé** dietician **Dr Sarah Schenker** takes one healthy, seasonal food and creates five delicious recipes that deliver our Smart, Healthy and Practical Eating (SHAPE) plan promise: to help you either reach or maintain your happy, healthy size.

LIGHT BRUNCH

FRENCH TOAST WITH PLUMS

Rich in fibre and immune-boosting antioxidants, plums give this simple to make brunch a sweet, delicate taste. Use sourdough bread if you're sensitive, but not intolerant, to gluten.

Serves 4

Per portion: 273 kcals, 8g fat,

4g sats, 0.4g salt

Prep time: 10 mins

Cooking time: 20 mins

- 250ml cranberry juice
- 1 tbsp agave syrup
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 500g plums, stoned and chopped
- 2 eggs
- 60ml milk
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 4 large slices sourdough bread
- 1 tbsp butter

Put the cranberry juice and syrup in a pan, add the cinnamon stick, heat for a few minutes and then bring the mixture to the boil. Turn the syrup down to a simmer, add the plums and cook gently for 10 minutes. Once the plums are tender but not disintegrating, remove the pan from the heat, cover and set aside, keeping it warm.

For the French toast, whisk together the eggs, milk and spice in a pie dish. Place two pieces of bread in the egg mixture and coat it well.

Melt half the butter in a frying pan over a medium heat and cook the bread for a couple of minutes on each side, until golden. Transfer the French toast to a warm plate and keep warm. Repeat the process with the remaining slices of bread, egg mixture and butter. Serve the French toast with the plums.





**TAKE
YOUR PICK**

Right now, we're at the height of the British plum season, as anyone who has a plum tree in their back garden will testify. Try one of the UK's ever-popular varieties, including the classic Victoria or the sweet-tasting green gage, or opt for a plum from foreign climes. There are more than 2,000 varieties world-wide, making them a much-travelled fruit.

READY IN 10

SCALLOPS WITH PLUM SAUCE

The ginger and star anise give a lovely Asian flavour to the plums that goes well with the meaty scallops. Scallops are high in protein and low in fat and provide important minerals, including Vitamin B12, which is essential for healthy circulation.

Serves 4

Per portion: 182 kcals, 4g fat,

1g sats, 0.5g salt

Prep time: 4 mins

Cook time: 6 mins

- 150ml mirin or sweet rice wine
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp ground star anise
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 500g chopped plums, stones removed
- 12 scallops, with the roe trimmed off
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh chives
- 200g samphire or spinach, steamed

Place the mirin, honey and spices in a pan and bring to the boil. Cook over a medium heat for 4-5 minutes, or until it reaches a syrupy consistency, then add the plums and remove from the heat. Mix well to evenly coat the plums. Brush the scallops with the oil and season. Heat a frying pan until smoking, then sear the scallops for 30 seconds on both sides, or until golden-brown. To serve, spoon a little of the plum sauce into the bottom of four serving bowls and place a scallop on top of each. Scatter over the chives and serve with the samphire or spinach.

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WHOLESONE PLUM CAKE

This cake is full of nutritious, health boosting ingredients. Used when ripe and in season, the plums add a sweet, sugary flavour, which is balanced by the nutty taste of the almonds and hazelnuts. The plums also offer up a hefty fibre boost (around 3g per slice). The almonds are a good source of protein, essential fats and vitamin E, while the dark chocolate is rich in iron.

Makes 12-16 slices

Per portion: 258 kcals, 18g fat, 7g sats, 0.3g salt (based on 16)

Prep time: 15 mins

Cook time: 45 mins

- 500g plums
- 5 tbsp dark sugar or coconut sugar
- 175g butter
- 175g wholemeal flour
- 175g ground almonds
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp hazelnuts
- 50g dark chocolate, chopped

Heat oven to 180°C/gas 4. Grease and line the base of a round 20cm cake tin. Halve and stone all the plums, reserve eight halves and roughly chop the rest. Put the sugar, butter, flour, ground almonds, eggs, soda and baking powder in a large bowl and beat for two minutes, until smooth. Stir in the chopped plums, hazelnuts and chocolate and then pour the mixture into the cake tin. Use a palette knife to even the top. Arrange the halved plums over the top of the mixture. Bake for 45 minutes until the top is golden and a skewer comes out clean when inserted into the middle.



BIT ON THE SIDE PLUM CHUTNEY

This has a tangy kick as the chilli and spices mix with the sweetness of the plums, and is high in fibre, thanks again to the plums. The coconut sugar has a much lower GI than ordinary sugar, helping to stave off hunger pangs.

Makes 1 jar

Per heaped tsp: 29 kcal, 0g fat,

0g sats, 0.1g salt

Prep time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 40 mins

- 500g chopped plums, stoned
- 3 shallots, peeled and chopped
- 1 Bramley apple, cored and chopped
- Knob of ginger, peeled and grated
- 1 tsp cinnamon powder
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp mustard seeds

- ½ tsp chilli flakes
- 150ml red wine vinegar
- 100g coconut sugar

Put all the ingredients, except the sugar, into a pan and stir. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes, until the plums are soft. Add the sugar and stir until it's dissolved, then simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened and slightly thickened.

Meanwhile, heat the oven to 100-120°C/gas 1-2. Place a clean, medium-sized jam jar in the oven to warm. When the plum chutney is ready, spoon it into the warm jar. Seal with a lid and leave to cool completely. Serve with oat crackers and soft cheese. It will keep for six months.



BEST FOR SPORT

PLUM BARS

These energy bars make the perfect snack either before or after exercise. The plums and oats are low GI, helping to avoid spikes in blood sugar levels. The plums also provide minerals, such as potassium, that are depleted during hard exercise.

Makes 12

Per bar: 309 kcals, 16g fat,

7g sats, 0.3g salt

Prep time: 15 mins

Cook time: 50 mins

- 200g butter
- 100g peanut butter
- 3tsp honey or agave
- 250g rolled porridge oats
- 150g dark sugar or coconut sugar
- 50g sultanas
- 200g stoned and sliced plums
- 1 tsp mixed spice

Heat oven to 200°C/gas 6. Melt the butter, peanut butter and honey in a saucepan. Place the oats, ¾ of the sugar and sultanas into a large bowl, mix together, and then stir in the butters and honey. Place the plums in a bowl, mix in the spice and add the rest of the sugar. Grease a square 20 x 20cm baking tin with butter. Press half the oat mixture over the base of the tin, then add the plums and spread to make an even layer. Press the remaining oats over the plums and bake for 45 minutes until golden brown. Leave to cool and cut into 12 bars. The bars will keep in an airtight container for 3-4 days. 🍌



TopSanté PROMOTION



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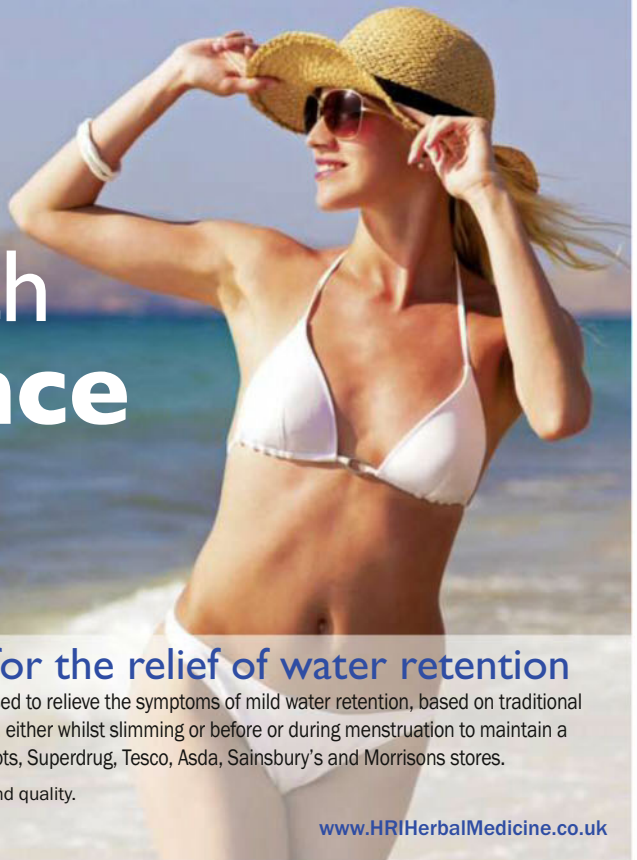
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MY LIFE IN HEALTH

Jenni Falconer

As she gears up for RideLondon, the TV and radio presenter and mum of Ella, three, shares her passion for staying fit to feel young.

Early starts are good for me – I have a system and it works well. I get up at 2.30am to present Heart FM's early breakfast show. I finish work by 6.30am then usually go for a run, to a class or to the gym. I don't have the chance to have a nap but I generally don't like the effect it has. I prefer to power through the day and go to bed early.

I'm a regular at Barry's Bootcamp, which is a treadmill and strength-training workout. I've done it three times already this week and am booked in for four sessions next week. I also do TRX suspension training, which was developed by a Navy SEAL. It involves two straps hung off a wall or a doorframe and you use your own bodyweight as resistance. You can do press-ups and sit-ups or tricep and bicep work. I have also started having a weekly personal training session just to push myself a bit further.

When I was about 20 I put on a lot of weight. I was presenting full time, was a student at Leeds University and also eating a lot! I'd gone up about four dress sizes so I took up running. To begin with, my aim was to run for just half an hour but I couldn't even manage that. When I did, I carried on to see whether I could run for a bit longer, and eventually managed an hour. It went from there and I ended up entering the London Marathon, which I ran in three hours 53 minutes!

I run without thinking about it now. I have done the London Marathon five times but have trained for seven – I had to pull out of two through illness and pregnancy. Every year I say, 'I won't do this again' and then I do. To be able to run in

something with elite athletes is quite special, and I enjoy running for charities and raising awareness.

I was diagnosed with Raynaud's syndrome at age 16. It's affects your circulation and first happened to me after my fingers froze up during a hockey match. Doing sports or exercise in cold weather can be painful if I'm not prepared, so in winter, I wear sheepskin gloves – looks weird but it works!

I'm pretty healthy but I am a terrible chef! I like simple things like chicken, salad and poached salmon with quinoa. Whatever I cook might taste OK but I can't guarantee it'll look appetising. I don't really do dinner parties. Once I was entertaining and someone picked a sachet of dressing out of the salad bowl!

I don't eat crisps or chips after a bet I had with my mum when I was 14.



Jenni ran this year's London Marathon in three hours 54 minutes.

She didn't think I could go without them for a month but I did, so I thought I'd see how long I could go – here we are 25 years later!

I avoid eating too many wheat-based foods. I feel lethargic afterwards and there's nothing worse than feeling like that when you are already getting up at the crack of dawn. I started having smoothies made with almond milk and almond butter, mixed with some vanilla protein powder. It's bizarre how something that tastes disgusting the first time you try it can become something you love.

I don't really feel like I'm going to be 40 next year. Exercising makes me feel young. I also don't like dieting so, for me, working out is a good way of making sure I can eat and drink what I want – within reason.

Listen to Jenni on weekday mornings 4am-6am and on Sundays 6am-8am on Heart FM. RideLondon festival of cycling takes place 1-2 August, 2015.

JENNI'S TOP ANTI-AGEING TIPS

- 1 EXERCISE.** It gets my heart racing, blood pumping, energises and de-stresses me and keeps me feeling young!
- 2 MOISTURISE.** To keep my skin in top condition, I regularly use Nivea cocoa butter, The Body Shop Satsuma Body Butter and Oskia's Bedtime Beauty Boost, which I use during the day as it's so nourishing.
- 3 BE HAPPY WHATEVER YOU DO.** For me, that comes from not stressing or panicking about things.



CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO A GREAT SUMMER BODY

BEFORE



LISL WINDT
RESULTS AFTER
USN'S 12 WEEK
BODY MAKEOVER
CHALLENGE

AFTER



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WITH XEDRA-CUT ULTRA XT CLINICALLY
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AGEING HAIR?
DEFY TIME WITH THE
COLOUR BRITAIN'S
RAVING ABOUT



“ One of the **best hair colours** I have ever used.
Less dryness, less frizz...
more vibrancy & shine!

Covers my grey
perfectly. ”

nice'n
easy

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